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HER ITALIAN PRINCE

BY

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I.

BEFORE the entrance of the Hotel Meurice a neat little railway omnibus, with a gigantic load of American trunks which swayed to the rhythm of the tinkling bells attached to the horses' throats, drew up and halted, and from within Hal Mumford tumbled, rather than stepped, out upon the Paris pavement.

He had been abandoned at the station by the feminine members of the party.

"Hal dear, be an angel, and see the trunks through the customs. Lillie and I are simply famished for tea." And then, with a parting wave of the hand, which forestalled all objections on Mumford's part, a final "You'll find us at the hotel."

Messages of this sort from his wife Mumford considered as commands. But the present holiday was not unmingled with protest. Inward protest, to be sure; and as though in league to legitimise his objections against coming abroad when he knew he could n't afford it, Fate had bobbed up at every turning with an obstacle which seemed to call out: "I told you so!"

From the moment Hal Mumford had seen his last of Broadway—he had taken a long parting glance through the tiny window at the back of the big landau which carried them down to the ship—he had been

growing steadily more and more wretched. Those eight days at sea—"Water, water everywhere." . . . He could put up with the "not a drop to drink" part, but there were the other complications, the ups and downs, worse than any stormy day on the Exchange.

Ugh! The very ground of Paris, upon which he now descended, seemed to rise and sink beneath him. The lonely arcades of the Rue de Rivoli suggested the ship's decks. Mumford pulled a handful of change from his trousers pocket and handed it to the cabman.

"Take whatever you like," he said to the astonished Frenchman. "I've got to get on land, or I'll be done for;" and, with a flourish of his coat-tails, he plunged into the Hotel Meurice.

The discussion with the customs officers, the drive across Paris from the station to the hotel, had taken Mumford longer than he expected. When he had been ushered by a groom in buttons to the parlor reserved on the register under his name, and where he expected to find his wife and Lillie Morse, two empty teacups stood on a tray which encumbered the centre table. This was his only greeting.

"Jennie," Mumford murmured gently—the pet name which he called his wife at the peculiar moments when, slightly angry himself, he yet recognized that the "best way out of it" would be by an apology to Virginia. "Jennie," he called again, and then in a louder tone: "Virginia!" And more dictatorial: "Virginia Mumford!"

This last brought from an adjoining bedroom Mrs. Mumford's maid.

"Oh, *Monsieur* have come!" she exclaimed. "The trunks, are they here?"

"Bother the trunks!" Mumford muttered. "Where's Mrs. Mumford?"

"Oh!" the little French maid exclaimed. "*Madame* has gone out with Miss Morse. She say it gets so late. Just time to do a few purchases before dinner."

Mumford sank back on the little red damask sofa.

"Shopping! She's gone to *shop*!"

Just then, the floor giving one of its fearful reminiscent lurches, Mumford roared out to the maid:

"Here, Eugénie—you speak French. Order me a whiskey and soda. Tell 'em to bring it quick. The ship's rocking like mad!"

But when the white panel of the door echoed to a rat-tat a moment later, it was not Mumford's whiskey and soda, but a tall, handsome, very evidently American man, young, clean-shaven, dressed to perfection, and far more good-looking than anything Mumford had seen since he reached France. The young man paused on the threshold, hesitating; then he said:

"Is this Mrs. Mumford's apartment?"

"Well, yes, I suppose it's hers," Mumford groaned. "I'm Mr. Mumford—Mrs. Mumford's husband." He laughed.

The American in turn presented himself.

"I'm Mr. Bedford—Alonzo Bedford. I came to ask if Miss Morse—Miss Lillie Morse—is here. I know she was to come with Mrs. Mumford."

Hal Mumford looked with new interest at the handsome American. The whiskey and soda now arrived, and he offered a drink to his compatriot.

"Why, yes," Mumford said, when his throat was free of the agreeable and restorative sensation of Schweppes and Scotch; "Miss Morse came over with us. She decided at the very last moment to join my wife."

"You came on the *Kaiser Wilhelm*, did n't you?" Bedford asked.

"Yes." Mumford took another long draught. "Just landed to-day."

Mr. Bedford hesitated. "I suppose Mrs. Mumford and Miss Morse came on with you from Cherbourg?"

"Oh, dear me, yes, of course. But they've been here two hours. Now, look here, Mr. Bedford, what does any self-respecting American woman who's been two hours in Paris do?"

Bedford laughed.

"I understand," he said. "Shopping."

"Well, of course," Mumford murmured out of the huge glass where his nose was buried; and then, not without purpose, he added: "Lillie Morse is a mighty fine girl. I'm awfully glad she came along. I don't know how well you're acquainted with her?"

Bedford interrupted hastily:

"I've known her not quite a year. But since I met her the first time in New York I've had no thought for any one else. You may find me too frank?"

Mumford shook his head vigorously, and, after a pause, he asked: "Does Lillie Morse know what your feelings are for her?"

"Yes," Bedford assented. "That is, yes and no. I suppose I made an ass of myself. Men in love always do. The second time I saw her I asked her to marry me."

Mumford gave a low whistle.

"Must n't rush things if you want them to turn your way."

He was glad, in the absence of his wife, and in his general feelings of misery, to have an American fellow-citizen to talk with. Tactfully, in the hope of retaining his visitor, he chatted on upon the one subject that could be of any real interest to him, and Bedford, impressed by the brusque frankness of his new-made friend, asked:

"How do you mean I must n't rush things?"

"Got plenty of money?" Mumford questioned.

"Yes, I suppose you might call it plenty."

"Well, then, go easy. Miss Morse has just arrived. You've come to call on her five minutes after she lands. That's all right to begin with. She knows you've cared for her, since you asked her to marry you at the start. But she does n't know what your feelings are now. She's in a vague kind of uncertainty. You call; immediately she concludes: 'Bedford's as crazy as ever about me.'"

"And I am!" Bedford put in ardently.

"Yes, but that's not the question. Just being crazy about a girl is n't going to win her. On the contrary. What you want is to make her yours, is n't it?"

Bedford nodded a prolonged and emphatic nod.

"Well, then, when she comes in presently—for I suppose even shopping must have an end—you explain to her that you have dropped in to call at once because you're going away. Do you understand? Leaving Paris; a farewell call."

"But why?" Bedford protested. "Just as she's arriving?"

"That's the whole point," Mumford chuckled. "If you stay on, hanging around, you're too easy game. If you come for a good-by visit, she'll be absorbed in you. . . . 'What! Bedford leaving just as I get to Paris?'" Mumford mimicked Lillie's astonishment. "'Why, the idea! Then he—— Oh, that can't be possible! He was madly in love with me. Could it be that somebody else——' Ah, there's the gist of the whole matter! Just a touch of jealousy starts the whole field into action."

Bedford meditated. But his meditations were interrupted by the brusque entrance of Mrs. Mumford and his beloved, Lillie Morse.

There was a moment of bedlam: Lillie astonished at Bedford's knowing Mumford; Mrs. Mumford amazed that Hal should have returned so soon from the station; Hal apologetic; Bedford all eyes for the lovely apparition which for so long his eyes had coveted.

Then in a sudden pause Hal heard Lillie asking Bedford:

"If you are settled in Paris, we shall see you often. We are going to spend the winter here."

Bedford gave one glance at his new-made friend. Then he answered like a man:

"I am, as they say here, installed in Paris, but, unfortunately, I'm leaving town in a few days, to be gone a month or two."

Lillie Morse's astonishment was evident, and there was a slightly icy tone in the little "Oh!" she pronounced. With an irony that was balm to Bedford she answered:

"We shan't see you again?"

"Oh, yes, if you have a moment during the next few days."

Lillie Morse looked at Mrs. Mumford, who, rising to the occasion, proposed:

"Why don't you join us to-morrow at one o'clock for lunch at Paillard's?"

"At one o'clock?" Bedford nodded. "I should be delighted." And, to the increasing amazement of Miss Morse, he took leave, professing some engagement for dinner which caused him to be in haste.

Overjoyed with the success of his little scheme, Mumford determined secretly to announce to Virginia the same sudden leave of absence for himself. But, with a pang of remorse, no doubt, at her first burst of extravagance in her recent round of shopping, Virginia was very tender with her husband. Putting her arms about him, as soon as Lillie had left them alone, she told him, all in a breath, how much she loved him, and how irresistible Paris is to the woman who really has good taste.

II.

"I KNEW he cared for me. I was perfectly sure of it. Virginia, wake up!"

It was Lillie Morse who had fluttered into Mrs. Mumford's room at an early hour, a small sheet of letter-paper held tightly between her thumb and forefinger, and a somewhat triumphant expression on her charming face. Her subtle smile seemed to prolong the reflections of a perfect pink *peignoir* in the tones of the dawn itself.

Mrs. Mumford evidently took it for the aurora. She turned upon her pillow, frowned with resentment at the early intruder, who pulled the curtains aside, letting a flood of light in upon Virginia's sleepy eyes, and then dragged up a chair and sat down by the bedside.

"Wake up, Virginia! You've had the whole night for rest, and I simply must let off steam to some one. We're in Paris, to begin with. Does n't that excite you in the least bit?"

Virginia groaned a drowsy "I've been here too often to thrill."

"Just look, though!" Lillie cried.

Virginia lifted her head and turned it in the direction of the window, through which she could perceive, dull as she was, the enchanting winter silhouettes of the vast elm-trees in the gardens of the Tuileries.

"Ugh!" she shuddered, drawing the covers more closely about her. "I hate Paris in cold weather. It's so gray and misty."

"You're no artist," Miss Morse declared, and she became pensive.

Wrung from her indifference by Lillie's dreamy mood, Mrs. Mumford drew herself up on her arm, looked Lillie well over, and with a woman's penetration asked:

"Well, what's the letter you've brought in to read to me?"

Lillie flushed pink, more pink than the rose of her dressing-gown, and nonchalantly, now that the conversation had taken the desired turn, she said:

"Oh, it's nothing special. I just wanted to tell you that Mr. Bedford has written. He's not quite as *blasé* as I thought, after all. I guess he cares for me still."

"Well, what does he say?" Mrs. Mumford had arranged her pillows and was prepared to listen.

"He wants me to go out this morning somewhere. He says he must have a talk with me before leaving Paris."

"You're not going with him?"

"Yes, of course I am."

"But where, for Heaven's sake, in this freezing gray weather?" Virginia shuddered. "To hover over the register of some empty museum, like the poor Parisian tramps?"

"There are other places besides museums."

"No doubt; but you can scarcely go to the Ritz for tea in the morning."

"Well, where we're going is of no consequence"—Lillie was becoming slightly irritable. "The point was that I thought it might interest you to hear Mr. Bedford had written me. After the cool and haughty way he treated me yesterday, I consider it extremely amusing to get word from him the first thing this morning."

"Oh, men are all alike, and women, too, for that matter. You know what they say about women in France?"

"No. What?"

"That she's like your shadow: you follow her, and she runs away from you; you run away from her, and she follows you."

"I'm not a shadow," Lillie protested; "and Alonzo Bedford can wait a good time before I think it worth while either to follow him or to run from him."

Standing at the threshold of Virginia's room, Lillie made this last remark with conviction. But, once alone, she meditated, wondering whether there were any truth in what she had said. The mirror in which she gazed long after her toilet was made sent back the perfect image of a face dyed crimson when at last Mr. Bedford was announced. Hastily Lillie Morse patted her golden hair as it lay in waves under the meshes of her veil. She pushed her hat more becomingly to one side. She took a final glance, which expressed contentment at her general appearance, and then, with a majestic sweep, she swung into the parlor, and, in spite of her warm, glowing cheeks, she greeted Mr. Bedford like an icicle. She knew inwardly that he was going to propose again, and the only thing to do was to be perfectly calm and perfectly frigid.

But Alonzo had learned his lesson better than Lillie dreamed. His one little conversation with Hal Mumford had sunk deep into his soul, and he was in an "icicle freeze icicle" mood which was bound to rouse Miss Morse.

"I came," he said to her, "at the unearthly hour, or, at least, I wrote asking if I might stop in a moment, before *déjeuner*, because, very unfortunately for me, I can't have the pleasure of lunching with you and the Mumfords at Paillard's."

"What?" Lillie gasped.

"It was rather abrupt of me, I know, to insist upon coming so early."

"Not at all."

He heard the piqued tone of Lillie's voice and was glad.

"I always get up fearfully early in Paris," she went on. "It's such an awfully nervous place. One can't possibly sleep here."

"Exactly," Bedford acquiesced. "My doctor tells me——"

"Doctor? You're not ill, are you?"

"No, no, not ill; merely seedy, as the English say. In need of a change. That's why I'm off to-day."

Lillie started, and Bedford went quietly on:

"The only good express for St. Moritz leaves in the afternoon; and, by the way, I've just about persuaded Mr. Mumford to go with me. He's got the regular New York broker's need of a holiday."

"Well, this is charming, I must say!" Lillie looked directly at Bedford, her clear blue eyes beautiful in their gentle rage. "What does Hal expect Virginia and me to do here, stuck down in the middle of winter in Paris, without a man? What is there left for us to amuse ourselves with, I'd like to know!"

"Why," Bedford ventured, "shopping."

"Shopping? I don't care a bit about the Paris shops. You can get everything you want better in New York, and a thousand times cheaper, besides." Then she added sceptically: "Hal is n't going off to St. Moritz with you, really, is he?"

"He said he would, last night. I left him at about two A.M. at the Chatham, and if he has n't changed his mind since then, we're off together to-day."

"It'll be the first time Hal's ever left Virginia of his own accord." Lillie's tone was astonished. Staring straight at Bedford, her eyes like two lovely liquid pools reflecting the blue sky, she declared: "I don't believe Virginia's going to like this a bit!"

On Miss Morse's entrance that morning, Bedford had perceived with some satisfaction that she was wearing a hat. It was then, probably, her intention to accept the suggestion he had made in his note to her that morning. Letting his eyes wander a moment from

Lillie to the outward scene which was framed as a picture by the long French windows, he asked abruptly:

"What do you say to a turn in the garden before lunch? I can leave you at Paillard's, if you like."

"Oh, I can't possibly stay out as long as that," Lillie protested; "but I don't mind going for just a little walk."

In spite of the raw winter chill, Bedford was wearing no overcoat, and Lillie, remarking upon his hardiness, as though she wished to wrap up for both of them at once, drew her furs closely about her, until the delicate fringes of the silver fox lay against the roses of her cheeks. With her arms plunged almost to the elbow in her generous muff, she turned laughingly to Bedford.

"Not too freezing?"

"Pretty chilly!" Bedford looked at her with a warmth that contradicted his words. "But it's not the weather that I'm complaining of. There are colder things than the north wind driving under the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli, you know."

Lillie took herself to be the superlative cold to which Bedford alluded, and this first personal note in their conversation gave her happy assurance.

"Why don't we go"—she turned sweetly to Bedford—"and see the house over in the Latin Quarter, where you've been living all winter? I don't mean actually to visit your apartment," she laughed, "but just to stare up at your windows, the way they do before the houses where celebrated people live."

"But I'm not celebrated," Bedford opposed.

"Well, any way, I want to see the place where you've worked so hard that you've got to go to St. Moritz to recuperate. I know the address: Quai Voltaire, No. 9. It was on your letter this morning. It sounds awfully far away. Can we go on foot?"

"It's just across the river there, not more than a ten-minutes walk, if you really insist upon flattering me to such a degree."

A light enveloping mist lay over everything, as if some one had wished to blend man's work with God's, prolong the vast roof-lines of Paris into the sky itself, bringing the clouds down to cling like some delicate veil among the barren branches of trees.

"Practical people call it just plain mist," Bedford laughed, as they paused for a moment on the bridge that spans the Seine beyond the Louvre, and looked up at the sun, which hung like a lantern of chrome on a ground of gray in some Japanese print.

"What do you call it?" Miss Morse asked.

"Oh, I'm a Philistine," Bedford smiled. "I call it 'atmosphere.'"

"That's what the people with artistic temperaments are always looking for, is n't it?" Lillie queried.

"So I've heard. Any way, there's more atmosphere to the square inch in Paris than in any other place I ever visited in my artistic wanderings."

Lillie's eyes had caught the white address on the little plaque of blue which adorned the corner house on the Quai Voltaire.

"This must be it!" she cried. "No. 5, No. 7, No. 9. There's the house. Now, which are your windows?"

"You'll have to stand back if you want to catch sight of my eyrie lodgings. There!" He drew her toward the ramparts which flanked the Quai and against whose sides the book-stalls had unfolded their little green cases, offering marvellous bargains to the amateur of cheap treasures. "There," he said, pointing skyward: "those four little windows on the balcony."

Lillie clung with one hand to her hat while she gazed.

"On the sixth floor?" she asked with astonishment.

Bedford answered her indulgently:

"Yes; the higher up you go, the more atmosphere you get."

Lillie shook back her hat into its most arch position on her crown of golden hair, and then, staring with all the depth of her blue eyes at her companion, with an expression half coquettish, half appealing, she said:

"But if you live as high up as that, I should n't think you'd really have to run off to St. Moritz for altitude."

"Well——" Bedford began.

But his response was broken by a cry from the river below—a wild, strange cry as of some one bidding farewell forever to this world.

Bedford started forward, and Lillie ran on by his side. In a moment they were but two involuntary elements of a crowd that was swarming and pressing forward on the bridge. Bedford, leading the others, flung himself down the flight of stone steps that led from the parapet to the river's edge. Thither, like flocking sheep, followed the crowd, grouping themselves expectant, agonized, cynical, about the little heap of clothes and misery that had been dragged from the river by those whose duty it is to give aid to the drowning. Lillie, stirred, tremulous, watching intense, saw that a life had been saved, snatched back from the darkness whose oblivion it had sought in the deep moving waters.

Instinctively she leaned against Bedford and whispered with something like awe:

"It's a woman. And she's so young——"

The alarm had been rapid. Rescue was fast upon despair. Scarcely had the color fled from the cheeks of the pale face that lay with eyes closed; the faintest breath parted the lips, whose clear lines denoted, as did the slender body under the clinging folds of its wet garments,

youth, extreme youth. The work of resuscitation was accomplishing its miracles. Eager with an impulsive generosity to do what he could, Bedford questioned the men in uniform who represented the law. The more important of the *sergents de ville* spoke in a low tone, giving directions, which he interrupted for a moment to respond courteously to the American's solicitation.

"It's only another case of disappointed love, no doubt," he declared. "We take an average of two broken hearts a day out of the Seine." Then he added with a more human intonation: "Just the same, it's sad to see so much youth trying to spoil itself. This is not a Parisian girl, either—you can see that. She's one of the poor little victims from the South, whom some *grand seigneur* has made love to, most likely. She's not to be condemned, but to be pitied."

Hearing his words, and understanding in part only, Lillie questioned eagerly:

"But how do you know what she is?"

"Her papers establish her identity. She is from the department of the Alpes Maritimes; Nice, Cannes, and the rest: luxury, frivolity, in other words. We have a wide experience, and this case most evidently is the too usual one of misery and seduction."

They had brought an improvised bed, upon which they now lifted the little burden, so much lighter in reality than the weight that had become for her unbearable. As the procession moved toward the life-saving shelter on the shore of the river, Bedford touched Lillie's arm and led her gently away.

"There's nothing we can do. She's in good hands now."

"Perhaps," Lillie answered in a dreamy tone, "if she really loves some one, she already regrets that she tried to kill herself, and is glad that they saved her."

"I'm awfully sorry," Bedford said, "that we should have seen such a thing. It was my fault. I ought not to have allowed you to follow down those steps."

"Oh, no," Lillie protested. "We might have been of some use, and, besides that, I'm not at all sorry to have seen that poor, tragic face. When you have only read about such things in the newspapers, you can't take them in at all." She did not add that she had put into the hands of the *sergent de ville* a hundred francs, which he was to give the poor *abandonnée* on her awakening.

For a time they walked on in silence, retracing their steps towards the Hotel Meurice. Then, as they turned again into the Rue de Rivoli, Bedford said:

"It was beastly luck that you should have had such an unhappy morning."

"Please don't," Lillie cried. "It was sad, of course. I shall never

forget that wretched little heap of discouraged humanity. But don't regret anything," she added. "It's made me understand things that were like fiction before."

"It could n't make you understand wanting to die for love?" Bedford asked, leaning toward her.

They had come to the entrance of the hotel. Bedford longed to revoke his decision. He wanted to stay by Miss Morse's side indefinitely, forever.

Then other thoughts intruded upon his memory. She was now no doubt in a tender mood, they had passed so near to death; but there was the recollection of her frigid manner as she had greeted him that morning, and still further back in the past stood out the day when Lillie Morse had refused to be Bedford's wife. Moreover, for the moment, he had given himself up to the perhaps mistaken guidance of Hal Mumford. So, lifting his hat and holding it in one hand, he extended the other to Miss Morse, bidding her good-by on the threshold of the Meurice. It was she who paused a moment, nodding as she glanced back at him over her shoulder.

"We shall see you in Paris again, perhaps? In the spring?"

"I hope so, surely," Bedford responded, turning away, down the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli.

III.

At six o'clock the two women sat alone in their hotel *salon*. Hal and Alonzo Bedford had taken the train for St. Moritz.

"It beats anything I ever heard," Virginia Mumford sighed, leaning forward, her elbows on the table, her pretty, jewelled fingers clasped before her.

"It's rather stiff, I must confess," Miss Morse responded, "to be deserted this way by the men. But for Heaven's sake, don't let's be tragic over it. There's only one thing for us to do."

"I'd like to know *what?*" Virginia's tone was despairing.

Lillie drew up her chair to the table, and with the ardor of one evolving some masterly plot, she began:

"We've been marooned in Paris. The only thing for us to do is to abandon Paris."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, to get out of the place as soon as we can."

"But where?"

"To some place more amusing than this. To Monte Carlo, for example."

"Monte Carlo!" Virginia echoed, the very possibilities that name suggested awakening an amused and mischievous expression in her eyes. "We can't go to Monte Carlo all by ourselves!"

"Well, we're two lone women. Whatever we do, we've got to do it by ourselves. So I say: Let's have some fun."

"You don't really mean this?"

"Yes, I do. Monte Carlo's a perfectly respectable place."

Virginia laughed. "It has n't exactly the reputation."

"Well, that depends upon how you act when you get there. The place itself is all right, and it's perfectly decent for two women to stay there alone. They even let a woman entirely by herself go into the gaming-rooms."

"Oh, you would n't go into the Casino!"

"We can see about that when we get there. The point is that we've been abandoned, and we're going to make the best of it."

As if hypnotized by Lillie's decision, Virginia was drawn into the spirit of the sudden move.

"We could n't get off to-night," she shook her head.

"Why not? It's only six o'clock. The express does n't leave until nine."

Springing up, Lillie ran to the door of Mrs. Mumford's room, called the maid, and gave swift orders for a prompt and speedy departure. Virginia, half dazed, followed suit. And when, three hours later, from the wild preparatory confusion, the two ladies with their maid emerged upon the *quai* of the Gare de Lyon, asking for the Côte d'Azur express, they looked outwardly as if they had intended nothing else for days than to leave by this especial train for Monte Carlo. Yet there was a lurking guiltiness in their expressions, mingled with a nervous hilarity, which revealed them to each other as accomplices in the most unexpected and *risqué* adventure.

The train halted and faltered out through the Parisian suburbs, and then, once past Fontainebleau and the most distant environs, it settled down to the rushing, roaring continental pace of the P.L.M., "fastest express in the world."

"Heavens!" Mrs. Mumford exclaimed. "American trains don't go as fast as this, do they?"

"Don't ask me." Lillie Morse shook her head, looking up from the illustrated pages of a French magazine. "When it comes to calculating kilometres and miles in a comparative sweep, I drop out." She again buried her pretty nose in the leaves of the review. And Mrs. Mumford, finding the atmosphere unsociable, got up and ventured out of their compartment into the hall of the corridor train. There, by the big window which was open upon the blank and wintry scene, slightly illuminated by a February moon, she stood gazing outward, wondering why Lillie was suddenly so grumpy, and what Hal would think of this wild escapade.

Virginia Mumford was not a hampered wife. That she perfectly

realized. Hal gave her all the money she could possibly think of using, and he never asked her, as many husbands might, "what she had done with that last hundred." She was free, and yet she had never thought of doing a thing without telling her husband all about it. This was her first adventure, and it was Lillie Morse, the young girl she was chaperoning, who had led her into it. "Pretty sort of chaperon I am!" she concluded. Her eyes followed the fitful restlessness of the fast-flying landscape, pale and shadowy under the winter moon as the train sped on.

But in a moment her attention was diverted.

"Virginia Bell!" She heard her name—her maiden name—pronounced, with an intonation of rejoiced astonishment, and, turning, she cried out:

"Gertie!"

A moment of feminine effusion followed. For an instant two enormous hats concealed under the vast waving of their undulating brims the embrace of two old schoolgirl comrades, who, in their unexpected meeting after many years, recovered through their mutual memories something of the past which is, no matter how distressing, dear to every woman's heart.

"Whoever would have thought of finding you here!"

Mrs. Mumford smiled, and her new-found companion drew her into the compartment adjoining that where Lillie Morse, under pretext of reading a French review, was letting her thoughts wander in idle solitude over the incidents of her morning in Paris with Alonzo Bedford.

Sinking down on one of the seats of the *wagon-lit*, Virginia Mumford gazed contentedly at the little bunch of femininity by her side.

"Gertie," she said, "I don't even know your married name."

"Bellamy-Scott," Gertie smilingly responded. "I can't pronounce the usual formal phrase, 'I hope you'll have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Bellamy-Scott,' for, to tell you the truth, we've been separated for almost as many years as we've been married, and that's a goodly number." She laughed, and went gaily on: "Bellamy is a perfect dear. He's one of the nicest men you ever saw. Only, we simply can't hit it off. I'm crazy about him when I'm away from him, and as soon as we're together I'm crazy about getting away again. We were children when we were married. He brought me abroad at once. I've spent twelve years over here. I live in Paris in the autumn and spring, and go south for the winter."

"But, Gertie"—Mrs. Mumford looked with wide-eyed wonder at her old school companion—"Gertie, if you're so dreadfully unhappy, why don't you divorce?"

"Oh!" Mrs. Bellamy-Scott laughed. "How frightfully American

you are still, Virginia! In France you can't imagine anything that is more unworldly—worse taste, in fact—than divorcing."

"But," Virginia Mumford protested, "it's so immoral to stay married to a man you don't love."

"*Petite, petite*"—Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's tone was indulgent—"how American, how provincial, you are! Every situation, my dear, is immoral. One needs only to lead a worldly life for a short time to find that out. But some things are good taste, and some are bad, and the only unpardonable sin in the fashionable world is bad taste." She laughed again, and, springing up from the couch of the *wagon-lit*, she caught in her hands a *bonbonnière* which lay in the rack above her head. Lifting the cover of the little box, she held out to Virginia Mumford an array of candies.

When Virginia had chosen, Mrs. Bellamy-Scott slipped into her mouth a large pink *sucré d'orge* which forced her teeth apart, and, smiling always, she said to Virginia:

"Now my mouth is absolutely full, so you'll have to talk. This is the only way to keep me quiet, by fixing my active jaws upon a sticky bonbon. Go ahead, Virginia. Account for yourself. What have you been doing all these years? You're married, of course?"

"Oh, yes!" Mrs. Mumford cried with decision.

"What sort of a man?"

"A perfect angel."

"Horrible! I hate angels, and especially 'angel men'!"

Mrs. Bellamy-Scott slipped the bonbon into her cheek long enough to give further vent to her antipathy for winged beings. Then she asked: "What are you doing over here? Going to Nice for your health?"

"No"—Virginia shook her head. "We're on the way, Miss Morse and I, to—Monte Carlo." She made a clean breast of it.

"Good!" Mrs. Bellamy-Scott exclaimed. "You have n't got your angel husband with you, have you?"

Virginia again shook her head.

"Well, then, just let me take you in tow. I know everybody who's worth knowing from one end of the Côte d'Azur—or 'Cocotte d'Azur,' as they call it," she whispered—"to the other, and I can give you a heavenly time."

Mrs. Mumford wanted to object that she did n't care for a heavenly time or any other kind of time, when she was without Hal, but she was interrupted in her confessions by Lillie Morse, who had crawled out of her rugs in their compartment, and had come to find out what had become of Virginia. As she stood on the threshold of the railway carriage, Mrs. Mumford beckoned her in and then presented her to Mrs. Bellamy-Scott. After a few minutes' conversation, the

three women parted for the night with promises of meeting again the following morning, on the arrival of the train at Monte Carlo.

It was only twenty-four hours later that Virginia Mumford received from her old school friend a note which read:

MY DEAR VIRGINIA:

I did n't "descend," as they say, at your hotel, because I always avoid, if possible, stopping in a place where I have friends. I don't believe in thrusting myself on people. Marriage proved for me, fast enough, the lassitude of obligation. You think me quite immoral with your deliciously puritan ideas about "angel men." However, dear Virginia, what I'm sending this note for is not to descant upon obligations and privileges, but simply to ask you and Miss Morse to lunch with me at *Ciro's* at one o'clock to-day. You will find Prince Gianotti, Count Marcellin, Baron Strombitz, and Sydney Langfrew, the younger son of an English lord. Do come!

Yours as of old,

GERTIE.

IV.

AT one o'clock the little party had assembled at *Ciro's*.

Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's table was reserved, and the deference with which the *maitre d'hôtel* greeted her sufficiently demonstrated the esteem in which this American lady and her millions were held at the most fashionable restaurant in Monte Carlo.

Lillie Morse and Virginia had dressed with scrupulous care. They had spent the morning at their toilet with the genial aid of the little French maid, Eugénie, and when at last they emerged, there was a mutual burst of admiration.

"Virginia!" Lillie cried. "You never looked so well!"

And with a sigh Mrs. Mumford responded:

"Oh, Lillie, I wish I had your figure!"

"Am I good enough for a prince?" Lillie asked.

"It really is rather exciting," Mrs. Mumford responded, "just the thought of meeting a prince and a count and a baron and the younger son of an English lord, all in one lump!"

"Now, look here, Virginia Mumford"—Lillie took a didactic attitude. "I hope you're not going to lose your head in the usual snob style over nobility. That would be too much! They're nothing but a lot of ruined good-for-nothings, any way; ready to do for money anything that turns up, even to marrying an American girl, provided there's cash enough back of her."

"Well, a prince is a prince, just the same. I don't care what his feelings about money may be."

"Yes," Lillie condescended; "I suppose that's so. I admit I do feel a certain agitation at the thought of lunching with a real prince. It's the first time, though, and that counts for something."

But Lillie's agitation increased when she found herself at Ciro's, with the Prince on one side of her at table, and the Count on the other, and both so exceedingly courteous and *empressé* that it seemed to her as if both were waiting simply the chance to find themselves alone with her, in order to declare their admiration, if not more than that.

At a neighboring table were lunching the Grand Duke Cyril and his wife. Prince Gianotti, pointing them out, whispered into Lillie's ear the story of the Grand Duchess. She had, it seemed, divorced her husband to marry the Grand Duke, who was the love of her life, and who adored her.

"But I thought," Lillie said, turning to the Prince, "that people in Europe did n't divorce."

"Grand duchesses"—the Prince shrugged his shoulders—"they do as they like. They do not *follow*; they *make* the law and the fashions. But every one can't be a grand duchess, of course."

His expression was pleasing as he made this remark, and Lillie Morse looked at the wife of the Grand Duke. The Prince's dark hair, brushed into a glossy lustre, waved backwards from his high brow. His eyes, deep-set under level brows, were melancholy. His short, dark mustache covered a mouth accustomed to smile, but sad in repose. Lillie felt that there was some hidden sorrow in the life of the Prince. He looked so romantic. A movement of tenderness surged up from within as she gazed at his handsome face. Turning at that moment, his eyes met hers, and there was a strange bond of sympathy established through the single glance.

And the Prince did not avoid the subject of personal attraction, like the Anglo-Saxon. He spoke at once of the *sympatica* response which Lillie had awakened in him.

"You are the first American young lady I have ever met," he said, "who seems to be not superficial. You have a soul, *Signorina*," he added, nodding his handsome head.

Miss Morse felt a certain enchantment at being thus told by the first prince she had ever met that she had a soul. The affirmation gave her confidence in herself. Alonzo Bedford seemed suddenly millions of miles away, like a poor speck on the horizon. The fearful independence of the Grand Duchess gave her a semi-royal feeling in the thought of indulging her American liberty. After all, Alonzo Bedford had left Paris at the critical moment; just when she was arriving. Why should she reserve for him any sentiment of especial loyalty? There was no use in being ridiculous.

She heard the Prince's voice at her side in response to her reflections.

"Does the *Signorina* care for excitement, like all American young ladies?"

"I adore it!" Lillie cried.

"Do you like automobiling in a racing machine?"

"Heavenly!" Miss Morse exclaimed.

"*Tanto meglio, tanto meglio,*" the Prince responded. "I have a machine of a friend of mine who's travelling just now in his yacht. Perhaps some day we may make a *promenade* together?"

"Too nice for words!"

Lillie did n't care now about anything further than the present moment. It was exhilarating to be with a prince, and to have him solicitous. She would go with him, certainly, in his motor.

The orchestra of Tziganies had meanwhile been tuning their instruments to the indication given by the violin, and now they burst into a strange, rhythmic music that caught hold of Lillie's heart-strings with a passionate appeal. The air they were playing was the "*Dolcezza*," an Italian love-poem set to music, and the Prince, leaning close to Lillie, murmured the words of the refrain, first in Italian, then in English:

*"Tutto al mondo è vano,
Nè l'amore ogni dolcezza.*

"All is vain under the sun;
In love lies every happiness."

Lillie listened; a smile parted her pretty scarlet lips. As the last note of the sobbing melody died away, the Prince murmured:

"When, *Signorina*, will you go with me in my motor to follow the blue coast, one afternoon?"

"To-morrow?" Miss Morse ventured. "There's no time like the present, you know, with Americans. To-morrow about four."

Mrs. Bellamy-Scott had risen from the table, and she indicated her desire now to stroll for a moment on the terrace of the Casino. Seeing this sign of general departure, the Prince caught up Miss Morse's hand, and as he kissed it he said:

"*Grazie, grazie, Signorina.* To-morrow, at four in the afternoon."

But Mrs. Bellamy-Scott was more persistent than Lillie in her determination to make a rendezvous. She gathered about her the Prince, the Count, the Baron, and Mr. Langfrew.

"What about to-night?" she asked. "Suppose we all meet after dinner in the gaming-room of the Casino?"

Mrs. Mumford looked at Lillie, who nodded an emphatic "Yes." The others acquiesced, all except the Prince Gianotti. With reverent regret, he bowed over Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's hand, and, kissing it, he pronounced his excuse—he was dining that night with the Grand Duchess Cyril. He could not, therefore, freely dispose of his evening.

Mrs. Bellamy-Scott, disappointed at the Prince's refusal to accompany their party, was nevertheless inwardly delighted at the royal-grand-duchess-excuse which her most coveted guest had given.

V.

As they entered the gaming-rooms that evening, Mrs. Bellamy-Scott and her friends, Lillie Morse was penetrated by a certain atmosphere of sentiment in the midst of so much rapacious brilliancy. Why had she a slight pull at her heart-strings? The place was tragic enough, to be sure, but she contemplated with perfect detachment the ferocious gamblers who hovered like harpies about the long green tables. They were massed there as multiple and anonymous fragments of steel mass themselves about a magnet, clinging, vibrating, palpitating. These men and these women seemed electrified by some strange, inexplicable force which clutched at the current in the so-called human passion. There were young and old, side by side; beauty that evidently despaired, and old age that was hoping still.

Lillie, gazing at the moving spectacle before her, sought Virginia's eyes, and when they had met, her shoulders went up in a little shrug, as much as to say, "What difference does it make? It's all so unreal, it can never touch you or me!"

But the sentimental appeal to her inmost feelings was made through a strain of music which drifted up from the terrace. It was the *Dolcezza* again, and Lillie remembered the Prince's face as he had translated for her into English the words:

*Tutto al mondo è vano,
Nè l'amore ogni dolcezza.*

Sydney Langfrew had fallen to Lillie's lot. Mrs. Bellamy-Scott was having a desperate flirtation with the Count Marcelin. Strombitz seemed to have taken a fancy, as Virginia expressed it, to her, and Miss Morse now, while the other women wandered at will about the gaming-rooms, seemed to fall naturally under the protection of Mr. Langfrew. He was very talkative. Perhaps he divined her feelings, accustomed as he was to the "eternal feminine," for presently he said:

"Hello! There's that *Dolcezza* again. They were playing it this morning while we were lunching at Ciro's. Do you remember?"

"Yes," Lillie nodded.

"It is Gianotti's favorite air, don't you know, that *Dolcezza*."

"Really?" Lillie asked.

"Yes. Do you know the Prince?" And then, quickly recollecting, "Oh, yes, you met him to-day at Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's, I remember. What a dear lady Mrs. Bellamy-Scott is! We're all devoted to her. Her slaves, don't you know."

"She was a school friend of Mrs. Mumford," Miss Morse threw in, with a sort of bored desire to say something.

"Oh, yes, don't you know, such a dear!" Langfrew declared. "Just a trifle, wee, little, weeny bit snob, eh?" He looked at Lillie

askance with his fair, handsome eyes, and went on: "Yes, just a teeny mite snobbish. But, after all, we must forgive that, especially in an American lady. We must n't take advantage of that little weakness, as the Prince does, for example. That would be quite against my principles."

"How do you mean," Lillie asked, "as the Prince does?"

"Well, you know, don't you know, Gianotti, for example, was n't dining one bit with the Grand Duchess to-night. The fact is"—Langfrew drew nearer to Miss Morse—"he can't stand gambling. You understand me. As long as he keeps away from the tables, he's all right. The instant he comes over the threshold he's done for. He's like some men with alcohol: it's enough to whiff the fumes to be half-seas-over. Prince Gianotti knew that if he came here to-night he could n't resist, and as he has n't a penny to bless himself and his splendid name with, he thought best to keep away. But he could n't tell all that to Mrs. Bellamy-Scott." Langfrew laughed. "An American lady would have no respect for a prince who could n't resist temptation. Dear, dear, no! So, don't you know, the Prince simply concocted, out of his lovely Italian imagination, that sweet little untruth about dining with the royal family. Awfully ingenious of him, don't you know, awfully Latin. An Anglo-Saxon would never have the face to—well, to fabricate in that manner."

"No, I should think not," Lillie murmured. And she led the way, stepping down on to the terrace to join the others, who had seated themselves about a small table which was laden with liqueur glasses and bottles. Lillie took a vacant place between Von Strombitz and Mrs. Bellamy-Scott. The moon in its early brightness was put to shame by the multiple lights which glared and flared about the open-air café, but there was something intense, limitless, in the deep blue of the horizon as it lay beyond the silent, sombre stretch of sea, and as Lillie gazed, she became dreamy. She was not listening to the conversation of the others, and after a time she leaned forward and appealed to Langfrew.

"Do me a favor," she said: "find those Tziganies, wherever they are, and ask them to play again the *Dolcezza*."

Langfrew disappeared, and presently from some part of the terrace floated up the refrain:

All is vain under the sun;
In love lies every happiness.

VI.

THE following day, at about four in the afternoon, Lillie Morse, standing on the hotel steps, greeted Prince Gianotti with a gay little nod and an exclamation of slight disappointment.

"But where's the motor?"

"Was it only the motor you cared to see, *Signorina*?" the Prince responded, and his eyes, while he said this, revealed his own preference for the human vision. He studied admiringly Miss Morse's exquisitely slender figure, whose graceful lines appeared more delicate under the weight of a heavy automobile coat. A long veil of *résida* chiffon hung from the brim of her small hat. The wind caught the folds, and threw the shadows hither and thither over the pale green surface of the light tissue. She held one end of this enveloping cloud, and, drawing it across the lower part of her face, she let only her eyes remain uncovered while she gazed steadily at the Prince, saying:

"Look, tell the truth! Do I or don't I seem glad to see you?"

The Prince lifted to his lips Lillie's free hand and kissed it. Then, standing for a moment longer on the *perron* of the hotel, he explained that as his machine was a racing-car, he did n't like to bring it up into the courtyard of the hotel, which necessitated a series of manœuvres that might somewhat jeopardize the health and wholeness of the buttons, the chasseurs, and various other servants who were gathered about the entrance of the European hostelry.

"The drive I've planned," the Prince continued, installing Miss Morse in one of the low *baquets* when they had regained the motor, while he swung his leg under the *guidon* and settled himself beside her, "is first to Nice along the Riviera, then back to Monte Carlo by the Grand Corniche."

Miss Morse could only nod in response, as the quick starting of the motor at the minimum speed of thirty kilometres an hour gave her the impression of being shot from a machine, which took her breath away. But in a moment, when they had struck the lower road, its smooth white surface seemed to glide under them as if their automobile were some hungry monster devouring in silence mile after mile of the glistening route. Lillie's first exclamation was for the beauty of the scene, the blue sea, the purple mountains, the brilliant sunshine. Gianotti delighted in her enthusiasm.

"I do not even see this view you speak of," he said to her, and apologetically she exclaimed:

"I ought n't to divert your attention when you're driving, I suppose. Is it very bad of me?"

"No, not that, not that! But I have no eyes for the view when I have the view of your eyes."

"Oh, how gallant!" Miss Morse laughed, showing the flash of her white teeth through the meshes of her *résida* veil.

"Not gallant," he responded deliberately. "It is the truth, and I tell you something else, *Signorina*. I am born of an old family, what you call 'decadent' in your young America, but I have learned what

it means to 'bluff,' and I have found out for myself one thing: the biggest bluff in the whole world is the truth. It's the hardest thing to get anybody to believe."

"Well, you could n't expect me to believe what you said just now about my eyes?" Lillie queried, resting the gaze of those two clear sapphires upon the Prince's dark pupils.

"No," Gianotti responded; "you would n't believe it, of course, because it is the truth."

Something very intense had come into the accent of his voice as he said these words, and Lillie felt a little thrill of pleasure. The compliment which she had taken so lightly as a bit of banal gallantry was the expression of some true sentiment, evidently. She reflected upon this, contentedly, while Gianotti's manner continued *empressé*, ardent almost.

In the short remaining course over the last few kilometres to Nice she felt a new attraction toward this foreigner. Indeed, when they halted at last at the entrance of Rumplemeyer's, descended from the motor, and took their places at one of the tables in these fashionable tea-rooms, Miss Morse was conscious of that vague, agreeable, exhilarating sensation which in the feminine vocabulary is designated as, "I actually believe I'm beginning to care for him." As she lifted her veil, drew off her long gloves, and threw them down with her purse—a bag of generous gold links over whose flexible surface were scattered in geometrical precision a handful of flashing diamonds—Prince Gianotti uttered a little exclamation:

"*Che bellezza!* It is a Cartier, I'm sure, who has designed you this Parisian creation!"

"Yes," the girl responded, as she turned the jewelled object over in her slender fingers. "Is n't it a beauty?" She drew from within it a bunch of French bank-notes, holding out the empty purse for the Italian to admire the *finesse* of the work. He studied it, amazed at the carelessness with which this young American girl carried so precious an object, and a roll of notes into the bargain, whose value amounted in all well up into the thousands of francs.

Miss Morse was pleased with the Prince's admiration of her jewelled purse. She leaned forward, drew toward her a teacup, filled it with the topaz liquid which had been brewing, blurred the whole with a dash of cream, and dropped into the cloudy midst a block of French sugar. Then, with a touch of intimacy, she looked at the Prince and laughed.

"I'm having a perfectly fine time. In this crowd of strangers, it seems as if I'd known you all my life."

Her remark delighted the Prince.

"I hope we may be friends all the rest of our lives," he said, lean-

ing his handsome head close to hers. "I tell you the other day that you are the first American young lady I meet who have what we call soul. You are *sympatica, Signorina, molto sympatica.*"

While he made this response, Gianotti had paid the *garçon* for their *gouter*, and Miss Morse presently led the way out of Rumplemeyer's, through the swinging doors, into the fast deepening twilight. As she took her place in the motor again, she dwelt mentally upon the slight accent of scorn with which her companion had pronounced the words, "How could she be happy, married thus out of her class!" What did it feel like, she wondered, to be in that "class" to which everything is permitted. And as they glided rapidly along, mounting, mounting the Grand Corniche, she decided, muffled in her furs, contentedly installed by the Prince's side, that she would quite enjoy the sensation of being a princess herself, a real princess.

At a steep turning in the road, when they had reached the highest point, Gianotti brought the motor to a standstill.

"It's a frightful descent from here down," he said, turning to the girl beside him, "in a racing machine especially, and more especially in this deepening twilight. You're not afraid?"

Lillie rendered a "Not with so good a driver!"

"*Brava! Brava!*" the Prince cried, extricating one of her little hands from the furs that enveloped them, and touching it to his lips, lightly, with the Italian gallantry. His handsome face and strong, regular features appealed amazingly to the girl at this moment. She had not withdrawn her hand, but let it lie in Gianotti's. Stooping again, he kissed it, this time with something more than gallantry, and as the motor swept forward Miss Morse felt a thrill that was not all excitement at speeding so swiftly down a rapid descent in the obscurity of the early winter darkness.

Gianotti was intent upon the automobile. The turnings were sharp, the road frightfully steep. With both hands on the *guidon*, he did not speak again. Yet Lillie was instinctively uneasy. An accident in this part of the Grand Corniche, the slightest defect in the steering-gear or the brake, and they would inevitably be precipitated over the perilous incline that flanked the road. Her vigilance was unabated. She lifted her veil, threw it back over her hat, and fastened it there, while, with her eyes thus unshielded, she peered into the darkness.

Down, down they went, winding, twisting, turning. Gianotti bent a moment to adjust the oil-feeders, and Lillie was at that instant the only one to see a shadow that swept out into the road just beyond, and halted there. With a swift gesture, she made the Prince see what she saw, and as he stopped the motor short she found words to say:

"There's a man there ahead, an awful-looking man. It seems as though he wanted to get at the motor."

"More likely into it," the Prince muttered, calling aloud to the shadow ahead, whose very posture was menacing:

"*Hey! Dites donc. Allez-vous-en de là!*"

"*Pas si facilement que ça!*" the shadow responded, approaching. Lillie could see that it was a man in peasant's clothes. There was on his face a look of terrifying hatred, which made her shudder as the conversation continued between the two men in French, spoken so rapidly that she could not understand what they were saying. Only here and there the words "money," "my sister," "suicide," "vengeance," and "ruin," and "a young girl defenseless," were comprehensible. But the intensity and violence of the peasant's manner were dreadful.

It was money the man wanted. That was too evident.

The road was barred before them. And Gianotti was hesitating!

So long as the man stood in front of the machine, this hesitation might mean a desperate conflict, death perhaps. The peasant, no doubt, was armed; Gianotti, without defense. Moreover—the thought flashed through Lillie's mind like lightning—the Prince, perhaps, had no money with him. She felt for her purse. Swiftly she pulled it from her coat-pocket. She leaned forward, looking the man full in the face.

"*Argent?*" she cried. "Money? *Trois mille francs?* Is it enough?"

The flash of diamonds on the jewelled bag caught the man's eye, stopped his chattering oaths.

"Good God!" Gianotti shouted. "She's given him her purse!"

The man, catching the precious sack as Lillie threw it, snapped open the diamond clasp, his fingers playing among the banknotes while he yet stood square before the motor. But the Prince, with a brutal gesture, started forward, and the man, grinning and muttering some further words which Lillie could not understand, sprang aside and let them pass on, down the turning, tortuous road.

In silence they swept along to the foot of the Corniche. Then Gianotti murmured in a tone of tenderness:

"*Sia benedetta.* You have saved us. By some miserable chance, I was without money, other than a few francs. Had it not been for you, I cannot say how things would have ended."

"But why should that horrible man have attacked you? It's worse than the Far West," Miss Morse exclaimed. She felt, now the shock was over, that she was trembling slightly. Yet, mingled with her amazement at all that had happened, there was a longing for justice, a desire to see some measure taken at once in the pursuit of their assailant.

"You must notify the police instantly," she declared to the Prince.

"No, no, not for worlds," Gianotti insisted, with a strange intensity. "No one must know this. It must be kept a secret between you and me."

"But," Lillie cried, "that awful man can rob the next people who pass in the same way he robbed us."

"It is not possible I notify the *gens d'armes*," the Prince reiterated. "You cannot understand. You are accustomed to the freedom of American ways. If it is known what has happened, all Nice, all Monte Carlo, all the Riviera, Mrs. Bellamy-Scott, Mr. Langfrew, *est-ce que je sais, moi*, will make a scandal of it. I don't mind for myself, you see"—he shrugged his shoulders—"but you will be compromised. You will be compromised. *Ca ne se fait pas*. It is not customary for a young girl to be with a man friend, alone, automobiling so late in the afternoon. It has grown later than I intended. I must protect you in this, believe me, believe me!"

Lillie could make no further objections. She could not notify the police herself. A little wave of regret went over her for her lost purse. It was such a beauty! But Gianotti was insistent.

They had come down to the road in front of the hotel, and as he held his hand out to Miss Morse, who stepped somewhat unsteadily from the motor, he said again:

"Not a word to any one, *non è vero?* I beg of you. Not even to the Signora Mumford. Above all, not to the Signora Bellamy-Scott."

Feigning a headache, Lillie did not dress for dinner that night. She had the maid serve her in their own sitting-room, where she stretched herself out on the sofa, enveloped in a cloud of pink *crêpe de chine* and lace, while she wondered at all that had happened that afternoon, and thought half reluctantly how she longed in reality for some one with whom she could "talk things over," some one who was not a foreigner, some one who was an American. And a man—a manly man. "Like Alonzo Bedford, for instance," she murmured to herself, with a backward turn of her memory to the day when she and Bedford had stood beneath his windows on the Quai Voltaire in Paris, just as that poor broken-hearted girl had tried to drown herself in the Seine. For some reason Lillie could not explain, the recollection of that livid face, as it lay crowned with its masses of dark wet hair, recalled to her another face. Whose? Where was the resemblance? . . . Ah! She had fixed it now. . . . She had traced it. The livid face of the little half-drowned girl was like a fair duplicate of the visage which she saw still close to her own as she had leaned forward over the motor, her jewelled purse outstretched in her hand. Yes, that horrible man on the Corniche reminded her in some way of the little *suicidée*. Could that poor, helpless creature be the girl, the "sister" to whom their aggressor had alluded in the torrent of words which she could

scarcely understand, as he railed in violent altercation with the Prince? Lillie meditated. A thought flashed across her mind: could the Prince be the man who had wronged this poor young girl, who had made her long to end her life in this tragic manner? Was it the Prince who had loved her, or made love to her, and then abandoned her?

Lillie put the idea from her; the coincidence would be too extraordinary.

"I suppose everybody I see now for a week will remind me of that awful man." As she shuddered to this conclusion, she rang for the maid, and, having asked for her portfolio and writing materials, she started a long letter addressed to "Mr. Alonzo Bedford, St. Moritz, Engadine, Suisse."

VII.

MRS. BELLAMY-SCOTT had herded her little flock together and was steering them toward Ventimiglia for a lunch at the *Réserve*. It was about noon when the party got under way. The air was warm and balmy, and with consummate art the cosmopolitan had arranged a veil of white illusion over her little sailor hat. Where the folds of the tulle formed a cloud around her throat, she had fastened a tiny boa of zibeline.

"You seem to be the snow maiden herself," Langfrew cried, "melting, don't you know, sort of dissolving in the warmth of her own radiant smile." The young Englishman was in excellent spirits. The odd number of the party, he represented the somewhat detached attitude of mind that permits of a frivolous participation in passing events which, for the sentimentally inclined, are fraught with suggestive meaning.

Seeing the Prince for the first time since their strange adventure on the Grand Corniche, about which she had at his request kept silence absolutely, Lillie Morse was stirred and troubled. She wondered what the Prince's attitude towards her would be; whether he had found any news of their assailant. She wondered vaguely whether he would give her back her purse, or one like hers. . . .

Mrs. Mumford, in like manner, was preoccupied. For the last few days the Baron von Strombitz had not left her side. He found in her presence such evident pleasure as brought her, with growing assurance, to the conclusion that he cared for her, and that she must come to some decision with regard to him.

Von Strombitz was adroit. He knew American women. He prided himself on his delicate understanding of the limits in the Anglo-Saxon flirtation, and so long as he made no declaration, Mrs. Mumford could proffer no defense. So she drifted in a dream-like, harmless atmosphere, feeling younger than she had for years. This frivolous existence, into which Lillie Morse and Mrs. Bellamy-Scott had led her, absorbed

an amazing amount of time. She had scarcely a moment in which to think, and as for letters! She thrust one hand into her coat as they rode comfortably along towards Ventimiglia. There in her pocket lay the last communication from Hal, received that morning as they were starting out, the envelope yet unopened. He wrote every day a line: he and Alonzo Bedford were feeling splendidly; the winter sports at St. Moritz were great; he was glad he had come; she would find him ten years younger after this outing. She was a dear girl. Affairs were going better in New York; she could order as many dresses as she liked in the Rue de la Paix, and would she please get through with all her dressmaking before he and Bedford returned, so that she and Lillie could "play" with them?

Mrs. Mumford turned over the unopened letter in her pocket, and, with feminine *finesse*, felt through the envelope that there was no "especial news" in this communication from her husband. It worried her a little to have left it there unread.

Gaining every minute in speed, they had beaten Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's Renault in its moderate course, and were already at table when the others arrived. Mrs. Bellamy-Scott jangled from her wrist a massive gold chatelaine, and as she studied the tilt of her hat in the little jewelled mirror, the Prince Gianotti, who took the seat next to Lillie Morse, said to her in an undertone:

"It is not found yet, your purse. You shall have it, *Signorina*. You have told no one?"

Miss Morse shook her head, fearful lest the others might overhear, and Gianotti, with his impulsive gesture, caught up her hand and kissed it.

"Oh, oh!" Mrs. Bellamy-Scott cried, rattling her gold chatelaine. "Prince, what *empressement*! You've been separated from Miss Morse for about an hour, and you greet her with effusion. . . . Virginia, it is getting serious!" She nodded her head again into the mirror, but Langfrew took up the argument:

"Gianotti's quite right! I'm sure Americans approve of the foreign hand-kissing. It's so deferential. *Cela ne vous engage à rien*, as a matter of fact!"

With characteristic absence of self-consciousness, Gianotti had started in to satisfy his hunger, falling with agile fingers upon the *hors d'œuvres* which were set out in tempting array upon the table. As he lifted a glass of the sparkling Italian Chianti to his lips, he gazed at Lillie with an expression of impulsive admiration. It was the first time he had looked at her with more than deferential approbation, and in this long enveloping glance Lillie now felt as if she were suddenly caressed. The Prince's arm, brushing hers, which was uncovered to the elbow, paused, loitered, as if in the momentary contact he wished

to express his newly-awakened love for Miss Morse. Startled, happy, Lillie moved slightly away from him, with a smothered exclamation which sent the color flaming into her cheeks.

"The table's so awfully small," she said.

Gianotti's lips were close to her ear as he murmured: "The table is small, but there are too many people. I should like it with you alone, with you and me alone."

The color stained deeper the fair contour of Lillie's cheek, and the Prince, ardent, persisted in an undertone:

"I should like it if we were away from every one, just you and I. I would show you what love may be. I would rouse you as the Prince awoke the Sleeping Beauty, by the magic power of love, of my love." And as Lillie, sending a rapid glance about the table lest they should be overheard, laughed nervously, the Prince added in a low tone, his voice vibrating: "My Sleeping Beauty, I love you, I love you!"

The sound of his words was covered by a general burst of laughter. Langfrew was relating some story which had set the others into a state of hilarity. Bent evidently upon playing the role of buffoon, he continued, drawling more than ever over his words, while Lillie's ears were ringing to the echo of another voice: "I love you, I love you, my Sleeping Beauty!"

The hostess had given the signal to rise. She wandered with Count Marcellin to the more remote part of the little Ventimiglia restaurant garden where, under the shadow of the umbrella pines, she installed herself, prepared to chatter idly with her *amoureux* until the chauffeur had lunched and the Renault was again in movement.

Lillie felt a certain timidity at finding herself alone with Gianotti. She had that strange feminine intuition that the Prince was "going to propose," and while she enjoyed with a new exultation the thought that she had so easily charmed this Italian nobleman, and that she might if she wished be herself a princess, yet the *dénouement* had come too swiftly. Unlike the American men, Gianotti had taken seriously her flippant encouragement. She had talked as she had with the Prince to fifty Americans without their immediately making love to her. Her happy uncertainty in the newness of the situation gave her a longing to be alone with him, and yet a dread of it. But all chance for such a tête-à-tête was swept ruthlessly to the *néant* by Mrs. Mumford. With Von Strombitz trailing after her, she fluttered over to Lillie's side, and, drawing a chair close, while the two men talked together, she said hastily to Miss Morse:

"I've just caught sight of Carlton Mason, lunching over there."

"Carlton Mason?" Lillie repeated in a vague voice, her mind far away from Virginia. "Well, what of it?" she drawled the question, slightly irritated at Mrs. Mumford's animation over this encounter,

when she herself, on the eve, if she wished it, of being proposed to by a genuine prince, was as calm as a May morning.

"Don't you understand?"—Mrs. Mumford twisted her pretty hands in supplication. "Hal's chum. He sees us here. He writes to Hal. And we're done for, simply done for. Hal will know everything. Oh, it's so silly of us to have come here this way! You've just got us into the most awful box, Lillie, by this ridiculous adventure."

"Virginia, calm yourself," the younger woman protested, alarmed at the tremor in her companion's voice, and fearful of a sudden outburst of tears. But more effective than Lillie's severity in arresting Mrs. Mumford's threatening tears, was the sudden appearance of Mr. Mason himself.

"Well, did I ever!" he cried.

Virginia feigned amazement. Mr. Mason's broad face flattened itself in its shining smoothness under the roomy smile that distended his nose and mouth. Lillie, with but one image in her mind, stared at him, and made frightfully disparaging comments on the coarseness of American men. But Mrs. Mumford, losing her head, presented Mr. Mason gushingly to her.

"Well, I declare," the latter said, "I knew you were over on this side, but I thought you ladies"—he nodded at them both admiringly—"were doing up the Rue de la Paix. Hal never said a word about Monte Carlo in his letter. Having a pleasant stay?" he added. "Did you ever see such weather? There's only one thing that can beat it, I guess, and that's the sunshine in the U. S. A. But it's a mighty fine place this, all right." He glanced with his small eyes at the two men, Gianotti and Von Strombitz, who stood near by, chatting idly. Then he chuckled, "I see you go in for the Dago crowd," and his eyes wandered back to his own table near the veranda, where a party of American men and two American women, very stout and somewhat overdressed, were waiting for him. "I'll tell Mumford I've caught this little glimpse of you, and that you were looking A No. 1." He held out a broad, stubby hand, first to Virginia, who gasped a breathless good-by, then to Lillie Morse, who as she placed her finger-tips in the fat palm of Carlton Mason felt already a slight shudder of condescension, such as she knew a Princess would feel at having to shake hands with a big, fat American business man, like this friend of Mr. Mumford's. But Virginia's thoughts were far from princesses. She sank back in a listless heap against the iron curves of the little *fauteuil* as Mr. Mason turned his generous back upon them.

"Virginia," Miss Morse entreated, "courage! It's no sin to be in a place like Monte Carlo, is it? I'm sure the people we're going with are as good as the Masons. I don't see what earthly objection Hal could have to our amusing ourselves. He can't reproach us, for he simply

went off and deserted us in stupid old, wintry Paris." Lillie was getting frightfully intense as she saw the Prince and Von Strombitz, fearing to be indiscreet by remaining too near, stroll off in the direction of the veranda, where Langfrew sat, lazily smoking a pipe. "As far as I am concerned," Lillie added peevishly, "I'm not responsible to any one. If you're sorry you came, you can go back to Paris."

"But what will you do?" Mrs. Mumford queried.

"I'll stay with Mrs. Bellamy-Scott."

Virginia paused for a moment, then she said:

"Well, we might stay for the carnival, I suppose. Our costumes are all ordered. It'll be a tremendous experience. I don't believe Carlton Mason writes many letters. He's on his holiday."

The three men had strolled back from the veranda; they now joined the ladies. As though divining something of their conversation, Von Strombitz asked:

"You're going to stay for the carnival at Nice, are you not?"

Mrs. Mumford looked at Lillie, who, with her clear blue eyes resting upon those of the Prince, answered:

"Yes, of course; Mrs. Mumford and I were just saying that we'd never been so happy anywhere as here."

Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's perfect little Renault had glided silently up, followed by Langfrew's machine, into which the party now climbed, leaving Gertie and the Count Marcelin to follow as they pleased, on the homeward journey to Monte Carlo.

VIII.

LATURBIE was the objective point selected by Mrs. Bellamy-Scott for tea on the following afternoon, and the faithful made with her this pilgrimage as to a shrine.

As they all descended from the funicular car, Mrs. Bellamy-Scott, alert as hostess, turned to her friends, and, with a sidelong glance at the Count Marcelin, said:

"Until four o'clock every one may do as he pleases, wander where he likes. At four we meet for tea." And as if her remark were some incisive instrument, the party broke up at once, scattering in different directions. Lillie accepted the suggestion of Prince Gianotti that she traverse with him the half-deserted village of Laturbie and climb the hills beyond, where they could have a splendid view. Once installed upon the mountain slope, it was not the view on which the Prince Gianotti fixed his eyes; he gazed with longing admiration at Miss Morse, until at last she became embarrassed, and, turning laughingly, placed her parasol across his eyes. But he caught the hand which was free, in both of his; he bowed over it, kissed it, and murmured to Lillie, as he had at Ventimiglia:

"I love you, my Sleeping Beauty, I love you!"

"You must n't," Lillie remonstrated feebly, drawing her hand from Prince Gianotti's firm clasp. "You must n't."

"Say to the mountain torrents, 'You must n't'!" cried the Prince. "Say to the ocean's tide, 'You must n't'! Say to the love, the ardent passion, of a man for his adored one, 'You must n't'! Try to curb the violent forces of nature with your little wilful 'No,' and wait for the result, my own!" he cried, again folding Lillie's hand in his own and drawing closer to her.

"You must n't!" she cried again instinctively, not knowing what she did.

"My own," the Prince repeated, "your resistance is like the beating of a butterfly's wings. Rest a moment here. Be in peace. Know that I love you." He drew nearer, folding his arms about her. "You shall be my wife, my own. Say that you will, dearest soul."

For an instant, Lillie's head swam. She leaned, not quite knowing where she was, against the strong arm of the Prince, in an abandon which left no room for thought. But the sudden approach of his lips to hers brought her back, like the dash of cold water on the half-unconscious. Furiously she flung herself away from the man beside her.

"You must n't!" she cried angrily. "And that's not a useless murmuring against the force of nature! I mean what I say. I'm not a Latin, you must remember. I'm a free-born American girl. I decide for myself what I want and what I don't want."

"But you must listen to me," Gianotti murmured, trying again to fold her in his arms. "I love you. That is not nothing! The love of an honest man? I want you for my wife, my own. You shall be Princess, Princess Gianotti. Say that you will not refuse me. Say that my love impresses you. Give me an answer, my beloved soul. Give it and let it be 'yes.'"

The earnest note that thrilled through the Prince's words touched Lillie. Then the recollection of their drive on the Corniche flashed across her mind. The Prince's insufficiency and inadequacy to defend her surged back upon her thoughts! Her own suspicions regarding the poor little half-drowned girl in Paris. She remembered a remark which Sydney Langfrew had often made: "The Italians are all very well for lovers, but for husbands—I pity the woman who *marries* one of them." Slowly, by a thousand instinctive influences, Lillie Morse's thoughts were turned from the appeal the Prince was making to her. She spoke to him gently, but with a decision, a firmness, that amazed him.

"No," she said very solemnly; "I cannot marry you. Not possibly!"

"But why, why, Signorina Lillie? Do you not see my love, and how I would make you happy?"

"Your love is only half of the story." Lillie shook her head.

"You mean I do not love enough?"

"No," Lillie explained very sweetly; "I mean that two must love, to make a marriage. You love me, but I do not love you. I can't love you."

"Oh, say that perhaps you may learn to."

"No, I can't possibly. I can't, because you're a foreigner. It's not prejudice. It's just something in my marrow-bones that makes me know I never could be happy with any one but an American." Lillie felt relieved when she had spoken these words, which, as nearly as she could formulate them, expressed her sentiments; but she was astonished and somewhat touched when she saw that Gianotti was weeping.

"You were my chance of happiness," he murmured, his face buried in his hands. "Do not say, *Signorina*, that I have lost you!"

Lillie watched the tears well slowly through his fingers, glide over the palms of his long, slender hands. They were real tears, the first that any man had shed for her. She felt inclined to show her compassion, but a recollection of the Prince's ardor, as he had spoken to her, froze her impulse at its source. She could show him no tenderness which he would not misunderstand, mistake for love.

"Ah, *Signorina*," he murmured, "say that I have at least a chance to win you!"

"I can't say that," she answered. "It would not be true."

"Then tell me untruths," cried the Prince, "but let me hope."

"I can't," Lillie repeated. "I cannot tell you what is n't true."

The Italian lifted his handsome face. The eyes were limpid, the cheek was wet. He gazed long at the girl by his side. And then he said with desperate fervor:

"Oh, if you were only poor, Signorina Lillie!"

Miss Morse shrugged her shoulders, not understanding this allusion to her worldly wealth, and the Prince continued:

"Yes, poor. I might make you understand. You would perhaps love me then."

This question of money irritated the American girl.

"But I'm not poor," she said, "and I hope I never shall be."

Some distant clock struck four. The silvery notes rang out across the hillside. The shadows had deepened, folding all in a semi-obscurity which too obviously suggested the lateness of the winter hour. Miss Morse got up from where she and the Prince had been sitting.

"Come," she called, "we are going to find the others for tea. You must n't be blue. I'm not a bit more interesting than hundreds of

girls. You'll forget all about me in no time, when I've gone back to Paris."

They had started to make their way through the little village of Laturbie, to join the others, who had given them a rendezvous at four o'clock for tea. As they traversed the main street of the half-deserted town, in a part where the houses were crumbling to ruins, Lillie suddenly noticed a man who was following them. He slipped out from a vacant yard and ran toward them, unseen by the Prince. He then further tried to attract their attention by appearing on the road before them. But the Prince was absorbed, he was preoccupied, nothing could divert him from the desperation into which Lillie's answer to his appeal had plunged him.

Yet as this dusky man stood before them again and again, while they descended the road through Laturbie, Lillie believed she recognized him. He was the man who had attacked them on the steep, winding way when they were returning from Nice to Monte Carlo, by the Grand Corniche. There was no mistaking him. Amazed at this strange, persistent apparition, Lillie studied the features of the pursuer more closely than she had dared before, and again, involuntarily, her mind reverted to another face—that of the girl whom they had drawn from the Seine, half dead, on the day when she and Alonzo Bedford had been walking on the Quai before his flat. Yes; there was no doubt of it. Not mere feminine nerves, but intent observation, brought into startling comparison the little half-drowned girl with this violent assailant.

As they reached the lower road, the man, waiting for them at a sudden turning, laid his hand on Prince Gianotti's shoulder. The Prince uttered a sharp cry. Shaking himself free with a promise, half-muttered, half-cursed, to the man, he entreated Miss Morse to leave him and join the others.

"Go, *Signorina*," he said; "the tea place is only a step beyond. You will find the others. Forgive me, I must settle with this creature here."

And while Lillie traversed alone the remaining distance that separated her from Mrs. Bellamy-Scott and her guests, she felt a certain revulsion against the Prince.

Marry a man like this?

There was a burning flame in her cheeks as she put the question mentally to herself.

Be sent on ahead, alone, while the Prince settled old scores with gruesome men who jumped out in dark roads to assail him?

Marry him? No! No! A thousand times no!

Waiting until Lillie's slender figure had passed out of sight, the Prince turned to the peasant, who was looking also in the direction

where the young girl had disappeared. A low curse passed the man's lips, and he nodded sullenly.

"The time has come to reckon. I have made you my conditions. If you don't fulfil them, *tant pis pour vous*. You seek here to make a marriage, one of your rich marriages for money. But you will first pay the debts you owe, you understand?"

He drew near, so near that the Prince shrank back, as the man's breath blew warm against his cheek.

"Yes," he went on; "*tant pis*. You took my sister from us here, a peasant, defenseless. Where is she now? *Ah, Dieu!*"

With a gesture of despair he flung out his arms. "Where is she? Lost! *Perdue!* Gone to perdition. Has she not let us know herself from Paris, where she fled in your pursuit, that she has attempted there to drown herself? *Ah, Dieu! Dieu!*"

The man's voice sounded like a sob, and for a moment the Prince was softening, but in a flash the spirit of vengeance again animated the peasant, and with a violent bitterness of hatred he cried:

"You are in my power now! You shall make some reparation, or I will expose you. All you have done that is dastardly and contemptible, I will make it known to your fiancée!" He sneered.

At this last word of insult, the Prince, tingling, sprang forward instinctively and struck the man full across the head, a blow dealt nervously and with a tensely that sent the peasant reeling, and spread him in an inanimate heap at the other side of the road.

Then, very quietly, Gianotti readjusted his hat, which had pitched to one side with the swinging of his uplifted arm.

He had no money to give this irate fellow whose sister he had made love to, foolishly enough, in a moment of youthful ardor. Nor could he give money to the little girl. He was not responsible for the transgressions of the lower class. And, above all, he could not endure being annoyed. It was necessary, and the sooner the better, that the irate brother—he glanced towards the lifeless heap at the side of the road—behave himself, cease his persecutions and his attempts at blackmail. "*Noblesse oblige, n'est-ce-pas?*" Again the Prince shook himself with a shiver of disgust, and then proceeded down the hill.

When Lillie reached the little inn where Mrs. Bellamy-Scott had given the rendezvous, she was greeted by a chorus of "Where is the Prince? What have you done with the poor fellow? You haven't thrown him down the mountain?"

Lillie did not find these jokes in the least funny, and the solemnity of her expression was met with a fresh outburst from Langfrew:

"Oh, I say, it's serious, don't you know!"

But at this moment Gianotti joined them. He was smiling. His

soft gray hat was pushed back on his dark hair. The trace of recent emotion intensified the brilliance of his expression. Lillie could not but admit to herself that he was wonderfully handsome.

IX.

VIRGINIA had come shuffling in on her heelless slippers of pink satin to the *salon*, where breakfast was laid. Sinking down before the table, she sighed, nodding her head at Lillie.

"Poor, darling Hal," she murmured. "He must think me a perfect p-i-g! I've never spent so much money in my life as I have since we've been in this awful place, and I've only written Hal about a quarter as often as I usually do."

"Well, he seems to be surviving all right," Lillie smiled.

"Yes, but what am I going to tell him?" Virginia's eyes were wide open and frank, like those of the astonished child who has followed his impulses heedlessly, and who finds himself suddenly obliged to give in accounts.

"Tell him?" Lillie echoed. "Why, tell him the truth."

"But I can't do that!" Virginia shook her head. "Yet I've never deceived him in my life, and I'd rather die than begin now. I love Hal better than anything in the world."

Miss Morse burst out laughing. "Mrs. Kill-joy Mumford, I'm going to nickname you, Virginia. Sufficient unto the day is the *man* thereof. Haven't you learned that, by this time? My maidenly experiences seem to have been at a better school than yours."

"Yes," Virginia reluctantly acquiesced; "but you don't love a man with all your soul and heart and mind and being."

"I don't go in for melodramas," Lillie tossed at her; "but I guess I know as much as the rest of you do, about some things."

This obscure remark, Virginia felt, was meant as invitation to allude to Lillie's sentimental affairs; but somehow Mrs. Mumford's wifely heart was set upon her own immediate problems.

"I'll be as glad as anything," she said, "when this old carnival's over, and we can go back to Paris again."

"Mrs. Kill-Joy," Lillie hummed. "The carnival's going to be simply wonderful. I tried my costume on yesterday. It's the prettiest thing you ever saw, Virginia Mumford!"

"I'm sure I'll feel like a scarecrow in mine," Virginia meditated. "Von Strombitz insisted on designing it for me." Then, very solemnly, she asked: "You don't believe that I have done the Baron von Strombitz any harm?"

Lillie shook with laughter.

"Poor old Von Strombitz! I guess he can take care of himself."

"Oh, Lillie!" Virginia sighed. "Try to understand my position."

"To conquer and resist! That's the gist of it," Lillie resumed.

"No, really. You know I'm not a flirt. Never since I've been married have I once allowed any man to make love to me. Never once."

"Well, you seem to be beginning."

"Oh, you dreadful creature!" Virginia cried.

"Look here," the younger woman said, "you'd better treat me with more respect. Suppose I were to tell you that I had refused a prince within the last forty-eight hours?"

Mrs. Mumford clapped her hands joyfully.

"Oh, Lillie, really?"

Miss Morse nodded assent.

"But why? Why refuse him?"

"Did n't love him," Lillie responded laconically. "Won't marry anybody I don't love. True American, I. The regular free-born type—looking for something to cling to." She laughed, but Mrs. Mumford was serious.

"You might be a princess?" she said.

"Yes," Lillie nodded.

Her companion stared at her a long time in amazement, and then she declared deliberately:

"Lillie Morse, you're in love with another man. You're in love with Alonzo Bedford. I'll stake my life on it."

The color staining Lillie's cheek told a tale of its own, but different from Lillie's words.

"I don't care a bit about Alonzo Bedford in the way you mean," she declared. "He's no more to me than a dozen nice Americans I've known ever since the Flood. But it is n't necessary to suppose I'm in love with some other man just because I refused Prince Giannotti, is it?"

"Well," Virginia meditated, "there are n't many American girls who seem to have the courage to refuse a bona fide prince. And I must say," she continued deliberately, "I think it would be rather amusing to become a princess."

Lillie had drifted into a more serious mood. She looked out now through the open window, over the Monaco gardens, to the wide stretch of sea beyond, blue as the heavens above, vibrating under the warm rays of the sun.

"Virginia," she said very solemnly, "I could n't possibly marry a man I did n't love; not even if he were a king. And I could n't possibly, no, not possibly, love a man who was n't an American."

The declaration was interrupted by the entrance of Eugénie, Mrs. Mumford's maid, bearing in one hand her mistress's carnival costume, which had just arrived, and in the other hand the mail from St.

Moritz, which also had just arrived. Virginia stretched out both arms with a smile of delight, and took from Eugénie the little fancy costume for the carnival.

When the evening of the carnival came, and Lillie Morse emerged from her hotel room into the *salon*, where she waited a moment, gazing at herself in the glass, astonished, happy, her incognita seemed assured, for even Mrs. Mumford, entering, looked with dazzled excitement at her, and exclaimed:

"Lillie! No one could ever know you!"

"Really?" Lillie asked, withdrawing her mask, and giving another rapid *coup d'œil* at her image in the mirror. "Am I so disguised as that? Put on your own mask, Virginia, and let's see whether I'd recognize you."

Virginia placed the little strip of black satin over her eyes.

"Now," she said, turning, "would you say at a glance, 'Virginia Mumford all over'?"

"I don't believe that even your own devoted, faithful Hal could have the vaguest, slightest passing notion as to who you are!" Lillie laughed delightedly.

The ball was to be given at the Casino, and Langfrew was to call for the ladies at half past eleven o'clock. The Committee of Decorations had decided that, according to the long-time tradition at the *Redoute*, the costumes, whatever fantasy, animal, flower, character, or person they might represent, must be in two colors only. Mauve and yellow was the combination they had selected, and Mrs. Mumford, following the carnival instructions, had donned a Columbine costume in mauve and yellow: short skirt, three-cornered hat, tiny cape hung from the shoulders. She appeared young and seductive in this gown which Von Strombitz had designed for her.

Lillie Morse had composed for herself a butterfly costume. The wings, the bodice, the skirts, the stockings, and the slippers were of mauve and yellow. A tiny cap bound her brow, and from beneath her hair escaped, short and curly, a golden mass. Yellow her hair, mauve her eyes, whose habitual blue had deepened to violet with the excitement of the moment.

X.

A BLAZE of light, a warm, gigantic breath of perfume, a sea of figures moving to the violent rhythm of a Hungarian orchestra,—such was their first glimpse of the *Redoute* at the Nice Casino.

Prompt to the minute of eleven-thirty, Langfrew had reappeared at the hotel, calling for the two ladies. Their escort, however, was transformed.

As Lillie Morse caught sight of his costume under the folds of an ample overcoat, she cried out:

"Oh, Mr. Langfrew, how delicious! A rabbit! Look, Virginia; did you ever see anything so amusing? Mr. Langfrew has disguised himself as a rabbit—a mauve and yellow rabbit. It's too heavenly!"

The Englishman threw open his coat and placed momentarily before his eyes a mask.

"Would you know me?" he asked.

Virginia was very solemn.

"No, certainly not," she said; "and I consider it very necessary that we *should* know you. You are our escort. There may be hundreds of other rabbits all in mauve and yellow. You must wear some sort of sign, so that we can distinguish you."

"Oh, I say," Langfrew drew back, looking at himself in the glass. "Am I to be spotted, whatever I do?"

"Yes," Lillie laughed. "You've made a martyr of yourself by offering to accompany two helpless females to the masked *Redoute*. I guess you won't have much of a show for yourself to-night, Mr. Langfrew."

Langfrew bowed to Lillie in a gallant manner, which made his rabbit costume all the more ridiculous, and, glancing at the clock on the mantel-piece, which pointed twenty to twelve, he suggested that they start along. From a bouquet of flowers which Eugénie, with the usual sentiment of the French, had placed on the centre table of Mrs. Mumford's hotel *salon*, Sydney Langfrew drew a scarlet geranium. Placing it conspicuously in the buttonhole of his mauve and yellow costume, he said to Virginia:

"There, now, no matter how many rabbits there may be at the *Redoute*, you'll recognize your own faithful, by the little spot of scarlet. Eh? Agreed?"

"You're a perfect brick," Virginia responded, "and that's almost as good as saying, 'You're a true American'!"

"There'll be plenty of true Americans at the show to-night," Langfrew drawled. "Americans are crazy about the *Redoute*. They adore it."

"I hope"—Lillie Morse's tone was somewhat dogged—"I hope there'll be something besides Americans."

"An Italian, for example?" Langfrew suggested.

"Oh, don't be silly," Miss Morse responded.

"Well," the Englishman continued, "the best way to find out what there is at the *Redoute* is to get there as fast as possible."

He led them to the automobile which he had kept waiting at the door of the hotel, and, after rolling for a moment, with the cool sea breeze blowing against their flushed faces, they emerged into the

splendid hall of the Casino, where the warm wave of the heat greeted them like the fumes of some wine which carries with it an intoxication to the brain.

The ball-room was a mass of blazing lights. At either end an orchestra was installed. On the spacious floor the vast crowd circulated, undulating to the rhythm of the music, harmonious in the two colors prescribed by the Committee on Decoration.

The first sensation which Lillie Morse and Mrs. Mumford experienced was one of astonishment. Every one stared at every one else. Recognition was not possible. All the cordiality of the usual wordy reunion was suppressed by the little satin mask which rested, baffling, upon the face, like a stroke of the pen which renders a signature illegible. Then, as they wandered around and around the vast Casino ball-room, Langfrew by their side, the two ladies became more tamed to the first eccentric influences. After all, they were strangers, absolute strangers. Except for two or three acquaintances, they did not need even their masks to disguise them, and the presence of these two or three acquaintances was doubtful. Mrs. Bellamy-Scott, for example, was most horribly bored at the very thought of the carnival. She had gone in for that sort of thing when she was young, very young, she declared, and the mere thought of it now made her *blasée* to a degree! The Count Marcelin shared Mrs. Bellamy-Scott's views on the subject of the *Redoute*. There remained Von Strombitz and Prince Gianotti. Each of the ladies had an especial opinion regarding these possible participators: Virginia Mumford was sure that Von Strombitz would scorn such a general and public sort of ball; Lillie Morse was certain that the Prince, whatever scrape he might be in, would come to the Casino, knowing that he might find her there.

The brilliancy of the scene was wont to foster secret emotions. The heat, the crowd, the music, the strange magic power, and the masks. . . . Ah, here lay the secret of the ball's seduction. The wee little strips of satin, fastened across the bridge of the nose, seemed like so many frontiers traced between one's past and the present moment, between one's own personality and the acts one might accomplish in disguise.

Lillie Morse grew bold. No one could ever recognize her. Of that she was assured. There were a hundred mauve and yellow butterflies, more or less protected, about the room. Why should she not amuse herself? A certain dreadful confidence came over her, and, with an audacity of which she supposed herself incapable, she turned suddenly towards a masked Harlequin who, for some quarter of an hour, had dogged her footsteps. With a feverish impulse, she said now to him, in Italian, the only words she knew:

"Tutto nel mondo è vano."

The mask, drawing nearer to her, finished :

"Nel amor'ogni dolcezza."

Lillie recognized the voice of the Prince.

"I recognize you," she murmured. "You do not need to keep up the disguise. I knew you would come."

The mask leaned a moment toward her, and, lifting one of her hands, pressed it to his lips. This gesture confirmed Lillie in her certainty that the mask was no other than the Prince Gianotti. She forgot Langfrew, she forgot Virginia Mumford, and, following the lead of her new-found escort, she wandered, disappearing at once, in the surging mass of merry-makers.

Watching with amazement this sudden disappearance of Lillie, Virginia Mumford turned confidently to comment upon it to Sydney Langfrew. To her astonishment, her horror, Langfrew also had vanished. She stood alone, quite alone. Her head swam. The blazing lights, the frightful heat, the swarming, whirling throngs, seemed to mount like wine to her brain. She became intoxicated with the spirit of festivity. Her mask, a dangerous accomplice, lent audacity to ardor. And when, a moment later, a tall, straight Pierrot in mauve and yellow leaned forward and murmured through his mask some words of admiration, Virginia yielded to her impulse and accompanied the Pierrot, wandering with him in the gorgeous, moving throng. In a strange, inexplicable way, Virginia felt confidence in this Pierrot.

"Do you know," she said to him, "the people I came with have simply abandoned me, left me to my own resources in this awful crowd!"

She spoke with her natural voice, and with a foreign pronunciation almost unintelligible the Pierrot said :

"Ze fête is vera bretty to-night."

Virginia remained as silent as a stick. The Pierrot went on :

"Ze moments I come in I see you in ze crowd. I zay, 'Zere is ze ladee I look for!' Tell me, tell me, pretty Columbine," he continued, "you stay long time at Nice?"

"Oh, no," Virginia explained; "we came over to Nice to-day. We have been at Monte Carlo."

"At Monte Carlo? Indeed!" The Pierrot's accent was very poignant. "And you return zere to-morrow, my bretty Columbine?"

"No," Virginia blurted out, somewhat *glacée* by this compliment. "We are leaving Monte Carlo to-morrow."

"Tell me, pretty Columbine," the mask said, "where are you going to-morrow?"

"Oh, to Paris," Virginia responded naïvely. "I'm going to Paris." Then, with a demure inspiration, she added: "I'm to meet my husband there—to-morrow."

She was horrified at herself at this sudden frankness which her mask seemed to inspire. Why tell a stranger these intimate matters? But was it a stranger? She was almost sure— Was it not—she could not be mistaken—Von Strombitz? Disguised as a Harlequin? The mask was pressing, very pressing.

"Tell me," he insisted. "You go to-morrow to Paris?"

"Yes," Virginia nodded timidly.

"You stay at the hotel?"

"Meurice," Virginia again nodded, not knowing how, thus uncontrolled, she could give even the address of her hotel in Paris.

"But tell me, dearest Columbine!" It seemed to Virginia that she had never heard an accent so poignant. She was at the same time enchanted and miserable. "Tell me," the Pierrot went on, "you will let me zee you in Parees?"

Virginia shook her head violently.

"No, no," she cried; "I can't possibly."

The band was playing a maddening waltz, the rhythm of which beat against Virginia's heart with a strange thrill, as if to say to her, "You are free!"

But she steadied herself. The dear old memories swept back upon her. She recalled the first evening she had ever danced with Hal Mumford. He was but a college boy, and she a girl in her teens. Those were disguises, too, she thought, those early years of inexperience. But when Hal took off his mask and laid it down before her, she had loved him more than ever, the real Hal. She thought of him so tenderly now.

"Ah, *Madame*," the Pierrot pleaded in his strange, broken English, "zay zat I may at least zee you once again, when you are wissout a mask; zat I may zee you once in Parees, when you shall have no Columbine costume, only your own sweet gown upon you—zay zis. Zay it! Wissout, I shall not live!"

Mrs. Mumford shook herself free of the hand which lay against her arm.

"Listen to me," the Pierrot continued. "Whatever you may decide, listen to me. I go to-night to Parees. I wait for you zere. I be every day at the Grand Hotel. I wait for you. I zit each afternoon from four o'clock until zix in ze big hall where music plays."

Virginia's brain had begun to whirl. She wanted to be rid of this insistent mask who, for some reason she could not explain, by the very accent of his voice was sympathetic to her. She wanted him out of her sight. She wanted to join the others. But where were they? Where had Lillie disappeared? Where had Langfrew gone? It was frightful being thus abandoned in a monstrous ball-room, with masses of indifferent masks around one, and an insidious Pierrot too near alto-

gether. Virginia shuddered; a horrible inclination to cry swept over her.

But at this moment a general movement of the throng directed her attention toward the box where the judges sat. There, at the instant when the prizes were to be awarded, she perceived, standing before the jury, a butterfly in yellow and mauve, with a mass of golden hair bound under a cap that encircled her fair brow. The butterfly stood between a Harlequin and a mauve and yellow rabbit. Though the judges' box was some distance from Mrs. Mumford, she fancied she could distinguish a flash of red in the rabbit's buttonhole. Without further ceremony, she fled.

Her Pierrot? She heeded him no further.

One thought alone prompted her to rapid action. Lillie Morse, the cause of all her anxiety, had taken the prize. She was being awarded by the judge the recompense for the most successful costume at the *Redoute* Ball. In another moment she would be unmasked. Then it would be too late. Virginia Mumford swept onward, upward, losing the Pierrot. Arrived at the judges' box, she precipitated herself into "the artistic midst," and, with a few rapid words in English, drew the mauve and yellow butterfly with her. Langfrew, horribly bored at this anti-climax, reluctantly followed. It was only when all three were again settled in the Englishman's automobile that Mrs. Mumford cried:

"Oh, please, to the hotel, as fast as we can go. I've had enough of *Redoutes* and carnivals! Lillie Morse, we leave for Paris on the fast express to-morrow morning!"

Langfrew deposited the two ladies at their hotel and prepared to take leave of them.

"I say, not off really to-morrow for Paris, are you? Why this *frousse*? Nobody recognized you at the ball, don't you know. It was so jolly, Miss Morse's taking that prize, I say!"

"We're leaving to-morrow without fail. Don't even urge us to stay another hour in this awful place," Virginia Mumford cried.

"But, I say," Langfrew persisted, "you're going to let me have your address? I'm going to Paris myself, don't you know, in a day or two."

"The Meurice," Miss Morse said.

And Virginia repeated:

"Hotel Meurice, Rue de Rivoli. Good night, and thanks ever so much for all your kindness."

"Oh, I say," Langfrew was still murmuring as the two ladies vanished at the end of the long hotel corridor.

Once in their rooms, Virginia showed a decided tendency to weep.

"Oh, Lillie," she said, "I've done the most awful thing!"

"Virginia, brace up," Lillie remonstrated. "Don't be a perfect watering-pot."

Virginia continued to wail.

"I've just about made a rendezvous with a man I don't even know. It's too awful! Oh, why did we ever come to this dreadful, dreadful place?"

"You've just about made a rendezvous, and you're almost in tears? You perfect goose, look at me. I've made one, a bona fide rendezvous, with a man I've never even seen without a mask, and I'm as cheery as a cricket."

"Lillie Morse, you awful thing!" Virginia removed her handkerchief from her half-wet eyes, and looked out curiously at her companion. "Don't you even know who the man is?"

"No."

"Not even his nationality?"

"Yes, I know that."

"He is Italian!" Virginia smiled.

"Well, there's where you make the first mistake," Miss Morse retorted. "He's no more Italian than I am. He's an American."

"I thought it was the Prince," Mrs. Mumford explained, drawing off her gloves and beginning to let down her hair, preparatory to an all-night talk. "You don't mean to say," she added, "that that yellow and purple Harlequin was an American?"

"Yes, I do."

But Lillie did not add that the purple and yellow Harlequin was not only *an* American, but *the* American whom her heart coveted.

"How did you find out he was an American?" Virginia questioned.

"Just by talking to him. He knows a little Italian, but I could tell right away by his accent he was n't a real one."

"Oh, how exciting! Go on, do!"

"There's nothing to 'go on' about." Lillie was very cold-blooded. "He's fearfully attractive. I like him better than any man I've ever met. That's all. The rest is 'to be continued in our next.'"

"But, my dear," Virginia queried, "you don't even know him?"

"What difference does that make? As a rule, the more you know people, the less you like them."

"Well," Virginia sighed, "I can't keep pace with you at all;" and she busied herself weaving into long braids the soft tresses of her hair, while Lillie took her turn at questioning.

"Look here," she said, "you have n't actually made a rendezvous with a man you don't know? I am a free girl. It's different with me. There's no one who has a right to criticise if I meet a strange man any day I like at the Grand Hotel in Paris."

"Grand Hotel in Paris!" Virginia gasped.

"Yes. Is there anything so extraordinary in that?"

"Oh, Lillie, don't be so severe," Mrs. Mumford pleaded. "It's such a strange coincidence. It just happens that the Grand Hotel is the place where the—the Pierrot—said he would 'wait for me every day' until I came."

"The more the merrier," Lillie murmured.

"But I'm not really going to the rendezvous."

"Don't you *want* to?" Lillie asked.

"Of course I don't want to"—Virginia's tone was indignant. But in a moment she resumed meditatively: "I never heard such an attractive voice as that Pierrot had!"

Seeing Virginia become sentimental, Lillie reverted to practical matters.

"What time did you say the train leaves to-morrow for Paris?"

"Well, there's a fast train in the morning. But we can't possibly catch it. Eugénie's in bed, and I have n't told her a thing about our starting so suddenly."

"Do you suppose we could make the one o'clock P.L.M. express? They say it's the fastest train in France."

"Yes, I guess we can catch that."

"It's three A.M." Lillie bent and kissed Mrs. Mumford good-night; but Virginia made no move toward preparing for bed.

"Are n't you even sleepy," Lillie yawned, "after all this excitement?"

"I don't know whether I am or not. But I want to write to Hal before I go to bed. I can't rest another hour without telling him what has happened."

Lillie shook her head, and, yawning again, she murmured:

"Oh dear, I'm glad I'm not married!"

XI.

"HALF past four, Virginia! Just time for tea. Come, dry your eyes. Dash a spray of cold water over them, and let's walk around to the Ritz for tea."

It was the second day after the ladies' arrival in Paris from Monte Carlo, but Mrs. Mumford always was wretched and full of apprehension when without news from her husband.

"Just the same," Virginia proffered, when they were served and had begun upon their *gôûter*, "I do sort of wonder where the Prince Gianotti is at this moment. Langfrew said that night at Monte Carlo that he was in trouble."

Across Lillie's mind there flashed again the recollection of her drive with Gianotti, down the steep Corniche.

In trouble?

She saw before them, as he stood that night, the dark and menacing peasant who barred their way, and to whom, for the sake of momentary peace, she had thrown her little Cartier purse . . . such a beauty! She would never see it again. Of this she was now quite sure. After that first meeting, Prince Gianotti had never alluded to the ransom she had paid to save them from a tragic fate.

"I suppose," Virginia went on prosaically, "that princes have no end of resources, when by chance they are in trouble."

Lillie made no response to this inconsequent remark, and Virginia, stimulated and refreshed by her first cup of tea, continued: "It certainly would be rather amusing to become a princess. After you've been abroad even a short time, you get a hankering after titles, just like Gertie Bellamy-Scott. She's simply mad about nobility."

"Yes, that's perfectly true. But we ought n't to judge her. She's been so unhappily married."

Lillie broke up this reminiscence. The question of happy or unhappy marriages was sure to stir Virginia once more to tears, and any place, Lillie felt, was more appropriate for weeping than the Ritz Hotel at five o'clock on a March afternoon.

"I say," she cried, imitating the English drawl, "I'll be—well, I don't know what—if that is n't Sydney Langfrew wandering there by the door."

Mrs. Mumford twisted her head about and confirmed Lillie's certainty.

"It is he, as sure as I'm alive."

As if by some magnetic current, Langfrew's gaze was drawn toward Mrs. Mumford and Miss Morse. With one long stride, he found himself at their side, and with a cordial handshake he declared his joy at seeing them.

"This is jolly! I say, and so unexpected!"

"How did you leave Mrs. Bellamy-Scott?" asked Mrs. Mumford.

"All cut up about your departure." Langfrew giggled. Then, looking straight at Lillie, he said: "Shall I be awfully indiscreet?"

"Yes, do!" There was a chorus from the ladies.

"Well, you know, for some time Mrs. Bellamy-Scott has been fishing in international seas to find just the right sort of wife for Gianotti." Langfrew sipped from his cup while Virginia darted a glance at Lillie Morse. Then he went on: "I don't want to be *too* personal, you know, but I really do believe she'd quite set her *hameçon*, her baited hook, don't you know, on——"

Two female voices were lifted in an inquisitive:

"On?"

"Well"—Langfrew giggled into his teacup—"on one of you ladies. The younger of you. On, in fact, Miss Morse."

Lillie Morse, sitting violently upright, bristled with indignation. "I never heard of such audacity!"

"Why, yes," Langfrew went on. "You see, she counted on the Prince's behaving himself, at least until she got this international union consummated; but she, as it were, don't you know, she reckoned without her host. Gianotti is an old hand at ruses of all sorts. He simply could n't hold out, as it were. It's public property, the scandal he got into, so I don't need to make any bones of it."

Lillie's mind reverted instinctively to their pursuer on the Grand Corniche, and as the Englishman continued she grew a trifle paler.

"Yes," Sydney Langfrew drawled; "everything depends on the way a thing is done. Gianotti is a *grand seigneur*, of course. There's no better nobility in Italy. Only, he's a bit careless in the use of his privileges. He's mistaken *use* for *abuse*. He fancied that '*noblesse oblige*' meant all the '*noblesse*' on his side, and all the obligation on the other fellow's."

As he babbled on, Lillie saw the whole drama unrolled like a bit of tragedy before her: the dusky peasant on the Grand Corniche, the shadow who pursued them in the half-deserted village of Laturbie, and, above all, the little wet and miserable heap the *gens d'armes* had drawn from the Seine that wintry morning when she strolled on the Quai with Bedford.

She shuddered, with the sensation of passing near a precipice into which she might so easily have fallen.

"Do go on, Mr. Langfrew," she urged.

"Where was I?" the Englishman drawled. "Oh, yes, so poor, these poor Italians. We must n't judge them as we would an Anglo-Saxon. They are, so Gianotti says himself, a trifle decadent. A little over-ripe, been hanging too long on the tree, as it were."

"What became of that poor girl?" Lillie Morse persisted.

"I say, now, how nice of you to be so interested in that girl! I supposed you would want to know what had become of the Prince." Langfrew laughed. "He's gone off to some high mountain top of the Tyrol, where some relatives of his mother have a property. The Monte Carlo police gave him to understand he'd better, as you say in the States, 'get a move on him.'"

When the two women were again alone, Virginia sighed heavily. "It seems too awful, the whole thing, does n't it?" she asked Lillie, who looked at her and nodded: "All the *noblesse* on their side, and all the obligation on ours!"

XII.

At the Meurice the following day, a little envelope was handed to Virginia, restoring her to exhilarant satisfaction. The letter was from Hal, but before she could read it, Lillie, taking advantage of her

friend's absent-minded mood, hurried her off to hear the music at the Grand Hotel.

"I don't care where you take me," Virginia laughed, "now that I've heard from him."

The hall of the hotel was crowded, and Lillie, with a knowing little smile, withdrew into the writing-room, leaving Virginia alone to read the cherished letter. She read and studied, pondered and calculated. Hal would be in Paris that very night. Then she could put her arms about his neck, and show him how she adored him, tell him everything, everything. Dearest Hal!

But as if Fate wished to add to the already burdened list which Virginia designated in this general "everything," while she thought over all her foolishness since Hal had left her, a voice by her side, quite close to her on the little bench where she had sat down to wait for Lillie Morse, spoke her name, and with the sound of this voice a thrill ran over Mrs. Mumford. The voice said:

"Please look at me. Please speak to me. I do you no harm."

The English was the same broken English, the intonation was identical. No, she could not mistake it; it was——

"Turn and look at me," the voice entreated.

But Virginia didn't need to turn; she knew who sat beside her: it was the mask she had encountered at the *Redoute* Ball. A strange trembling took possession of her, shook her like a chill.

"Every day," the voice went on, pleading tenderly, "I wait here for you. From four until six I am here, waiting, loving," he added, in a more than ever ardent tone.

Without looking at him, Virginia felt, more than saw, that he had a long black mustache, that he was tall and powerfully built. She could not see the color of his eyes, and everything, in fact, seemed blurred and hazy by the emotion which his voice caused her. Oh, would Lillie Morse *never* return? What could she be doing in that little writing-room? Virginia dared not turn in that direction, as her *Redoute* friend sat, full and square, between her and the corner whence her only chance of rescue might appear.

"Please," she said in a very low voice, without lifting her head, "I beg of you, really. It's not gallant to annoy a woman in this way."

The voice was even nearer to her ear as it answered:

"Just one look, just one, *Signora*."

"How can you persist? A woman alone, too. It is most frightfully inconsiderate." She drew herself away, preparing to rise and flee. The voice drew nearer, nearer. Then, with a bound, Virginia was out of her seat and had started across the hall.

"How dreadful!" she cried, almost running. The swinging doors opened their wings to her. She was flung out upon the pavement of

the Boulevards, and, darting on amid the throng of vehicles, she found her way, headlong, breathless, to the Rue des Capucines, over the Place Vendome, into the Rue de Rivoli. Here under the sheltering arcades so near to the Hotel Meurice, it seemed to her that she was safe. But no sooner had she faltered than the voice, again by her side, whispered:

"Lillie, my love, my dove, why hurry so? You are in no danger."

These words added wings to her already flying feet, and with one leap she was in the corridor of the Hotel Meurice. Not stopping to take the elevator, she sped up the stairs, down the hall to their apartment. Drawing her skirts in with a swift turn, she flung open the door, and for a moment she faced the Pierrot, with his sweeping, bushy mustache. Then, sinking helplessly down on the divan, nervous, lonely, and with an outraged sense of the injustice of the incident, she rocked herself back and forth, disconsolate.

Suddenly she ceased to lament. Her eye became fixed on the stranger, and with indignation she cried:

"Hal Mumford! I recognized you long ago!"

Hal, smiling, put his arm lovingly around Virginia, but she pushed him away.

"What I demand now," she declared, "is an explanation."

"An explanation of what?" he asked, drawing off his bushy mustache and laughing outright.

"How did you happen to be at the Nice carnival?" Feeling somewhat ridiculous at the position in which this adventure had placed her, Virginia let her anger rise to submerge her wounded vanity.

"It seems to me," her husband suggested, "that if there is any explanation to be made, it ought to come from you."

"It was n't my fault," Virginia pouted. "Lillie insisted upon my going with her to Monte Carlo."

"You might have written me, at least, don't you think so?—that Miss Morse had become your guardian angel, instead of having Carlton Mason to give me the latest family news."

"That horrid Mr. Mason! I knew he would write you the first thing."

"He could scarcely suppose there was any secret to be kept. I should not have believed it myself a few weeks ago."

A sad note had rung out in Mumford's voice, and Virginia, softening, listened with less defiance to her husband. He went on: "A month ago you could n't have made me believe that Virginia, my Virginia, would feel the necessity for a—a—an intrigue of this sort. Just like Gertie Bellamy-Scott, or any other unhappily married woman."

"Hal!" Virginia protested.

He looked at her.

"I thought I made you happy, truly happy. I was a fool, I suppose. But how can a man know what's in a woman's heart?"

"Oh, Hal"—Virginia drew close to him, but he now moved away. "Promise that you'll never leave me again. I acted like an idiot, but you forgive me, don't you?"

Mumford looked long and tenderly at his wife.

"Yes," he said; "I forgive you. There was no harm in what you did. It was only your hiding it from me that I resent. And for the rest, I guess I can defend my honor."

These words he pronounced with a bitterness which startled Virginia.

"How defend your honor?" she asked, leaning against him appealingly.

He took her hands in his and kissed them. Then he got up and began to pace about the room.

"It's the consequence of their acts that women never consider," he began in a serious manner, which Virginia did not know. "The great feminine cry is, 'I meant no harm.' The woman breaks a man's heart—meaning no harm. She destroys the hearth that he has founded and warmed with his very life's blood, but she means no harm. She squanders his hard-earned final penny, but she means no harm. She shatters his soul-saving faith in her—meaning no harm. Only seeking diversion, oblivious of results."

Virginia had never heard Hal speak like this before. It seemed to her she had never loved him so much. And her heart ached so!

"You meant no harm, of course," he went on, tossing the ashes from the cigarette he had lighted, as he paced slowly up and down. "But you did n't suppose," he asked, "that I was going to let matters stand unexplained with that Austrian fellow, did you?—who, by the way, is no more a count or a baron than I am!"

"Hal, what do you mean?" Virginia pleaded.

"I mean just this." He had stopped before the mantel-piece, his back to the fireplace. Virginia watched him anxiously. "I mean that I asked an explanation from Von Strombitz, and that——"

"That——?"

There was a pause before Hal brought out slowly:

"That we are to fight a duel to-morrow."

"Hal!" Her cry was like a sob. "You can't do this. You must n't. It is n't right. There was nothing, absolutely nothing, not even the least flirtation, between me and that horrible man. Please, Hal!" She wrung her hands.

"You may have considered it nothing. He did n't," Hal answered. "I happened to go into a restaurant at Nice the night of the *Redoute* Ball. There were some men dining at the table next. Towards the

end of dinner, I heard your name spoken. It was this Austrian. He was telling of his American 'flirt.' I did n't wait for him to get any further. I struck him with my glove full across the brow. A good horsewhipping would have satisfied me better, but their sense of honor is peculiar, and, above all, coward that he is, nothing would terrify him so as to have to face the pistol."

"Pistol!" Virginia cried.

"Yes, I chose the weapon. He has first shot."

"Oh, no!" The tears were rolling down Virginia's cheeks. "Can't you force him to ask your pardon? Show that he is sorry? Make reparation of some sort?"

"A man's honor," Mumford said, "is something women can't understand. This man is a foreigner. I want him to atone according to his ideas, not mine."

Late into the night Virginia pleaded, argued, in vain, and when, toward dawn, she woke from a light sleep into which she had fallen at last from exhaustion, Hal was already dressing. He was making ready for the encounter, at which she could not even be present. She watched him with dull misery, and when he bent over to take leave of her it seemed as if there were a chill on his lips, like the chill of death.

When the door had closed behind him, she fell to sobbing, and during the morning hours she waited in anguish. Every step in the hall sounded heavy to her, as if shuffling under the weight of some burden. Lillie Morse sat by her side, waited with her, but neither of the women spoke. At last came the dread noise of hurried feet treading stealthily. Lillie flung open the door. The doctor, Bedford, and one of the young secretaries from the Embassy, who had acted as second, came in, bearing Hal, who was unconscious from loss of blood. He had been wounded, but not very seriously, as the bullet had glanced off, after striking one of his ribs. The doctor was grave, but reassuring. He had sent for a nurse, who would help Virginia to bring him soon back to health.

Virginia gazed at her husband's face, as he lay silent, beseeching him inwardly to forgive her, to get well for her sake, and quickly.

When, finally, he opened his eyes, he lifted one arm to place it about her neck. He drew her down, kissing her, and whispered, "Virginia, forgive me."

A rush of happiness welled back into her heart at these words. Heaven be praised, Hal would live!

She motioned to Bedford and Lillie to leave her now with the nurse who had arrived.

Late that afternoon, when the doctor had pronounced Hal on the rapid mend, Bedford found Lillie alone in their little *salon*. It was what he had most hoped for.

He shut the door tight, and, bending over her, he asked: "Have you told them yet?"

"I could n't," Lillie whispered. "Everything has been so tragic since last night, I could n't speak of my own happiness. I could n't bring myself to tell Virginia that we became engaged at the very *Redoute Ball* where——"

"Lillie," he murmured, "say again that you are happy."

"It might spoil you," Lillie smiled, "if you heard it too often."

"Look here," Bedford asked, "there's something I want to ask of you. You remember the first day we went out to walk together in Paris?"

"Yes." Lillie shuddered slightly.

"Was it so horrible as that?"

"Oh, no, I was very happy, only our pleasure was marred by that poor half-drowned girl whom we saw—the one who tried to kill herself." Again with multiple recollections, Lillie shuddered. Bedford put his arm through hers.

"Dearest," he murmured, "forget everything but our happiness. That miserable day a month ago, when I was to leave you, we went to the Quai Voltaire and gazed up at my sixth-floor balcony. Will you come back there with me now?"

When Lillie had put on her things, Bedford huddled her close to his side, along the Rue de Rivoli, over the familiar way that led across the bridge. Yielding, in this first great wave of abandon, she swept along with him to the Quai Voltaire, to the sombre entrance of No. 9, and then up the dark and mildewed staircase. Up, up, up, until at last they reached the topmost floor, and Bedford, opening his own front door with a key, ushered Miss Morse into his apartments. A faint streak of light—the early spring twilight—enlivened by the moon, spread a path of silver across the eyrie studio. The half-draped manikin in the corner drooped its listless arms, like some defeated character that has renounced all claims to life. The easel, the chair, and the palette beside it, all seemed spectral in the semi-obscurity.

"Dearest," he said, "are you happy here?"

Lillie had reached the little window open on the balcony; she stepped out, not heeding what Bedford said to her, and he, half desperate with the joy her presence brought him, followed, encircling her with his arms, leaning with her against the iron rail of the sixth-floor balcony.

"How beautiful the river is!" Lillie whispered. Her face was so close to his, she could feel him gently touch her cheek with his lips as he answered:

"You can't think how often I've stood on this balcony and just longed and longed for you, Lillie."

"If I'd only known!" She turned toward him radiantly, with something shy in the smile which illumined her face.

"But you *did* know once," Bedford nodded. "Well, what would you have done, if you had known, darling?"

"I should have kept out of that other affair."

"Which other affair?"

"Why, the one with the Italian prince whom I might have married."

"Don't say '*might* have married,'" Bedford pleaded. "That makes it sound so awfully possible."

Lillie waited a moment, then she said:

"No, it was n't possible, not one bit possible."

"You mean, because of the contemptible way the Prince acted about that poor girl?"

"Have you heard about that, too?" Lillie asked, amazed.

"Yes, of course. Every one on the Riviera was talking about it."

"Oh!" she cried, close to his side. "It seems so strange to think of that sort of frivolous life going on always. Virginia got a letter to-day from Mrs. Bellamy-Scott. She's cross with us for having left so suddenly." She laughed with the radiant flash of her white teeth, and Bedford stooped and kissed her.

"I'm happy now!" she whispered to him.

"You don't regret not being a princess? Just plain American Mrs.?"

Lillie drew away.

"You ought to say that I'm a queen, the queen of your heart."

"Darling, you are!"

"Yes, I am, but you're a little late giving me the title. And now"—she shook her finger at him—"there is one thing you must understand." She hesitated a moment, and then, hiding her face in her hands, she laughed. "Before I begin to be so serious, I've got an awful confession to make."

The young man bent forward eagerly.

"Yes," she said, whispering the words, and laughing at the same time; "I just simply can't call you 'Alonzo.' It is *too Italian!* And another thing I want you to know is that long before I ever heard of the Prince Gianotti's cowardly behavior about that poor girl, I refused him."

"You did!"

"Yes."

"Because you did n't love him?"

"Partly."

"Partly?" Bedford echoed.

"Yes; but principally because"—she put both arms around her

lover's neck—"principally because all the time I was in love with you."

Bedford led her gently into the room. "Stay here just a moment before we go back to the hotel," he urged. "I want to see you in the old studio where I've struggled so hard to do something that would make you proud of me."

"It's so peaceful here," Lillie said. She had sat down in a sweeping arm-chair. Bedford drew up a little low tabouret, and sat at her feet, speaking to her in low tones of love.

"I'm so happy," she sighed. "I could stay forever here in this old moonlit studio, feeling you near me, where I need only reach out my arms to touch you. Everything else seems millions of miles away."

Down on the Quai a poor street singer had stationed himself. His voice, sonorous and vibrant, reached the two lovers in their lofty dwelling. Lillie grew meditative as she listened, and, all eagerness, she cried:

"Do you know what that is he's singing? It's the *Dolcezza*. I love the words. I don't think I ever knew really what they meant before." And she repeated:

"All is vain under the sun;
In love lies every happiness."

Bedford folded her in his arms. She was his. And she was happy to be his. He took from her lips a long kiss, in which, while the sweet air of the *Dolcezza* enveloped them, he touched the soul of his beloved.



LOVE SONG.

BY CHARLES WHARTON STORK

IF you love me, do not tell me.
When I meet you I shall know,
If your hand draws back and trembles
And the words come strange and slow.

If your eyes through veiling lashes
Tenderly yet shyly glow,
And your lips, though proudly smiling,
Breathe a sigh of wistful woe,—

Do not tell me, do not tell me.
Let the word unuttered go.
Love is swift to read love's signal;
I shall see and I shall know.

LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL

*By Phillips Brooks**

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 17, 1869.

MY DEAR B——:

Your pleasant letter has been waiting for its answer a great deal longer than I meant it should, but I have been wanting to find a few moments when I should be entirely at leisure and could talk with you without feeling hurried. I have not found those few moments yet, but perhaps this quiet evening comes as near to what I want as anything that I am likely to get.

I wonder what strange and beautiful things you have been seeing to-day. I wish I could sit down to-night and hear your story about some queer old city that you have been wandering about and wondering at. I would tell you all about the strange city† that I have been looking at—a great big, flat town, with its streets running square across each other, with a splendid avenue of red palaces called the Avenue Walnut, with a magnificent cathedral on the corner of the Rue Dix-neuvième and a great brown castle at the corner of the Rue Seizième. Do you know the city, and would n't you like to see it?

I am glad you enjoyed the sea so much. I was sure you would. It is one of those things that people can talk about and hear about as much as they please beforehand, but can know nothing about until they see it. The more you see of it, the more it delights you. It behaves itself and is quiet—you feel as if it were a great, strong friend who was willing to play with you and pet you and forget how much bigger he is than you are; and if he gets angry and frets and howls, you feel in your good, strong ship that you can wait till he gets over his rage, and like your friend all the better because he is such a great, honest, unreasonable giant. Then I followed you

* It may be asserted in a broad sense that the late Phillips Brooks never said or wrote anything that was not interesting, and although these characteristically warm-hearted and sympathetic letters were written to one who was little more than a school-girl at the time, they reflect typically the beautiful thoughts and sentiments of the great divine. The letters have not hitherto been published, and it was only after considerable persuasion that their recipient consented to their being given to the public.

THE EDITOR.

† Philadelphia.

to Chester and Liverpool, and all the way across beautiful England to great, gloomy London. The old Chester Cathedral makes our little ten-year-old church * seem so like a baby that has seen nothing of the world yet and stares down Walnut Street as a baby stares at the foot-board of his cradle, as if that were all the world. But it's a very nice and promising baby, and will grow to something yet, I hope. We miss you very much there. The Sunday School class seems to have shrunk up and not to be as lively as it used to be, and I look in vain from my reading-desk for the familiar faces that always used to assure me that I had n't made a mistake and got into the wrong Church. I am glad you do not forget us. In all the grand churches you go to, remember your home church is Holy Trinity.

Reading your letter and writing to you makes me very homesick for the Old World. Well, make the best of it, and have the best time anybody ever had in Europe, and I will try and come over and look at you next summer.

Tell S—— I thank her very much for her little letter. It was very little, but very good. I think she ought to give me one all by herself—a whole one. If she does n't, I shall know she does n't want me to write to her, and perhaps I shall punish her by answering this. Remember me most kindly to your mother and Miss M—— and W——.

And now that you have begun so well, do let me hear from you as often as you can. It will always be a great pleasure to me, and count me always, my dear B——,

Your affectionate friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1869.

MY DEAR B——:

It feels like a breath of air directly out of Switzerland to sit down this hot day with your good letter from Zurich before me to try to answer it. It is pleasant to me to read it over, because I can see all through it what a good time you are having, and how much you are enjoying everything you see. I don't know how one could have more enjoyment or of a better sort than in doing just what you are doing now—seeing something every day that you have heard about all your life, and that you will remember as long as you live, and all the while having the people you love best about you and nothing to worry your nice little brain about except how you can have the very best time possible. You are a lucky child, and I hope you appreciate the privilege you have and pity us poor children who must stay at home.

* Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia.

Perhaps you are in Switzerland now. Don't you feel very small when you stand up alongside of Mont Blanc or the Jungfrau? I did. She is such an enormous Girl; but so grand and beautiful when you look at her from a distance—from the Wengern Alp or from the road from Milan to Tauri. And he [Mont Blanc] is such an enormous great white giant that the tallest of us has the luxury of feeling little when he gets into one of his wrinkles in the great valleys that run up from Chamouni.

And long before this you have met your father and are happy, I know, for you are a very filial and affectionate little person. It will make your journey a great deal pleasanter to have him with you. I had the pleasure of seeing him the night before he left and again at the cars the next morning.

I have not been at Philadelphia for several weeks. I go back next week, but I am too sorry to say that it is only for a little while. I am going to leave Philadelphia in October and coming to live in Boston, so that I shall not be your minister any more. I hope you are a little sorry for it, as I am very sorry indeed; but I hope you will let me be your friend always and will not quite forget me for any new minister that you may get. At any rate, I am your minister still, till you get home.

Tell S—— I have not got that picture yet, but I shall. I am quite hopeful about it.

Remember me most kindly to all your little party.

God bless you, my dear B——, and take care of you always.

Your friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

BOSTON, MARCH 1, 1870.

MY DEAR B——:

Your letter with a pleasant fragrance of Venice about it has been lying on my table for two months—a great deal longer than I meant it should, unanswered. And now you are in Rome. Do greet the Coliseum and the Baths of Caracalla for me. One moonlight night down at the Baths of Caracalla I remember as almost the last thing I saw of Rome, and one of the most glorious. The dear old town gets to be very homelike in a month or two, so that when you go away it is like parting from a friend. I don't think you have the same sort of feeling about any other place in Europe. It is because all the world has been so much at home in Rome—all kinds of people succeeding one another with their amphitheatres and columns and statues and churches, so that it does n't belong to any one time or set of people—certainly not to the old Gentleman who lives up in the Vatican and is trying to make the Ecumenical Council pronounce him

infallible. So take your part of Rome, my dear B——, bring home as much of it as you can crowd into your memory, which is always the best sort of a trunk to pack for coming home, and it will be a great thing for you all your life.

But you would rather talk about Philadelphia perhaps than about Rome. You must have heard and seen so much about Rome to-day that to-night you will be glad to fancy yourself in Walnut Street. I have been on several times this winter, since I came to live here. It seemed very strange to be a visitor, when I used to be so much at home. The pleasantest visit that I made was a short one to C—— and R—— T——'s wedding. I suppose you heard all about that. It went off nicely. We all had a good time, and they seem to have "lived happily ever after" thus far. Then I preached one Sunday in the good old church. It looked very natural, and all that I missed was a few familiar faces in the second pew in front of the reading-desk to make it seem precisely like old times. I am going on directly after Easter to marry S—— T——, and to preach there again. I love the Holy Trinity as much as ever, and always shall, and I shall always think that you and the other young folks who grow up there have one of the best churches in the world to go to, and shall pray that it may be blest to you very richly.

As to Boston, you must come here some day, and I will be *valet de place* for you and show you all its beauties. It is a handsome old town, with an ugly old church * right in the middle of it, where I preach. But come and see for yourself.

I am sorry that I have n't got a photograph. I have n't had one taken since you left, but I fancy I am improving a little lately, and I may get one soon. If I do, I certainly shall send it.

I am going to sail about the 1st of July. I shall see you in Switzerland. Have you seen Mr. C——? Don't be as bad a correspondent as I have been, and I'll do better next time. Give my love to all, and count me always

Your friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

BOSTON, APRIL 29, 1870.

MY DEAR B——:

I have thought so much about you for these last months that it seems almost as if you must have known it without my writing. I have not written, because as soon as I heard of the great sorrow † that had come to you in Rome I heard that you were coming directly home and supposed that any letter of mine would miss you. Only

* Remodelled later.

† Both the father and sister ("S——") of B—— died of Roman fever within two weeks.

the other day in Philadelphia I heard that you would remain in Europe till June.

My dear child, how can I tell how I feel for you? Nobody but yourselves can ever know what you have been through in this terrible winter, and nobody else can know anything of the Strength that has supported you through it. I thank you so much for your letter telling me all about your dear father's sickness and death, and I can judge from that what power was given you when the other terrible blow came which had not fallen then in your dear father's loss. How well I remember the night before you all left Philadelphia, the eagerness with which you were all looking forward, and the delight with which S—— peculiarly was counting upon the enjoyment of Europe! It is pleasant to think how happy not merely all her life here was, but especially how full of happiness these last months have been. Indeed, deeply as I feel your sorrow, when I think of her it all seems so beautiful. To live without a pain or a disappointment, almost without a care, such a bright sunny life as she lived, surrounded with love and full of kindness and purity, and then before the burdens of life lay heavily upon her to be gently taken to her Father and to the Saviour whom she loved so dearly and tried to serve so faithfully. I cannot think of any life and death more perfect and complete, and some day when you see her again I am sure you will hear her say that God never loved her more than when He called her home. I knew your father only well enough to see his kindness and goodness. I know how tenderly you loved him, and how worthy he was of all your love. It seems as if you could not do without him. The memory of all that he was, the assurance of his love and the constant influence of his life, may be with you always. It must as long as you live, and you may be very happy in it, looking forward to the time when God will call you to meet Him, and you shall find your father there.

My dear B——, you know that I am deeply, very deeply sorry for you. You will not doubt that. But I rejoice for you, too. God has been very good to you. He has lifted your life to Himself with the dear souls whom He has taken. He has drawn you tenderly to Himself, and I am sure you would be all ready to say that some of the sweetest and happiest hours of your whole life have been in all the pain of this past winter.

I am afraid I shall not see you this summer. I sail for Europe in June, about the time you will return. I should so like to have an hour's talk with you.

I was in Philadelphia last Sunday, and saw the dear old Church and the Sunday School class.

Remember me with the kindest regards and sympathy to your mother, and tell your sister M—— how earnestly I thank God for

His mercy to her. Do write me again before you come home, and count me always, my dear B——,

Your friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

BOSTON, FEBRUARY 27, 1871.

MY DEAR B——:

Thank you very much indeed for your letter, which I wish to answer at once, especially on account of its postscript, which tells me that you are going to be confirmed this Lent. I need not assure you that I am very glad indeed, and that I pray God to bless and direct you with all my heart. All that you have passed through in this last year must make your confirmation very solemn and very beautiful to you. You are coming to the Heavenly Father, who has been drawing you to Himself by much sorrow, but yet I am sure you can feel now that His leading has been very kind and tender. You are coming also to the Father who has taken your dear father and sister to Himself, and so you must feel that you are coming to them as you come to Him. I know you must be thinking very seriously about it. You have only one thing to learn, and that is how your Saviour loves you—how ready He is to forgive all your sins if you earnestly repent of them, and how strong and watchful He will be to guide you and keep you from sin in the future if you pray to Him. I am sure that it will be the beginning of a happier life than you have ever known, a life which will go on growing happier and happier as you grow older, until at last it brings you to the happiness of Heaven. Remember always that the happiness of the Christian life is always just in proportion to its faithfulness. Begin your new life in affectionate prayer to God, and never forget to pray. Make your Bible very precious to you. Look to your Saviour always for strength and guidance, and you cannot go wrong and cannot fail.

How well I remember the day, years ago, when I came to see S—— about her confirmation, how earnest and sincere she was, and how full of simple faith in her Lord. Hers was a very happy Christian life, and yours may be just as happy if you trust the same Saviour whom she trusted; and the memory of her trust will make it all the easier for you to trust Him.

I wish that I could talk with you; but Mr. Jaggard will give you all the direction and help you need. You will find him, I am sure, a kind and wise adviser. I hope you will talk to him freely and let him help you. Above all, go directly to Christ, and He will help you more than any earthly friend can. May God bless you, dear B——, and be very near to you always.

I thank you very much for the photograph, which is excellent,

and which I shall value very much indeed. When I have mine taken I shall send you one. I should like to see you in Boston, and I hope you will come. I should think it would do you all good, especially as I am sorry to hear that you have not been well. How I wish I could look in upon you! I may come after Easter.

Write to me soon again, certainly before Confirmation time. You must remember me most kindly to your mother and Miss M——, and count me always

Your friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

BOSTON, OCTOBER 6, 1871.

MY DEAR B——:

I have been waiting for that leisure hour which never comes, to answer your pleasant letter from Catskill, for which I thank you very much indeed. It brought a pleasing air of the mountains with it into my city room, and your suggestion that I should come to the mountains, too, was very tantalizing to one who could not get away, but I was very glad that you were enjoying it so much. I spent a day and a half there several years ago and remember it as very beautiful scenery and a delightful home. I have been here all summer, only stealing away for two or three days between the Sundays. My people here are many of them poorer than the good folks at Holy Trinity, and so they have to stay at home more in summer. The Church has been quite full. I have seen a good many Philadelphia people here on their travels back and forth, and they always remind me of pleasant days in the old City where I lived so long. Now I am looking forward to another visit, which I hope to make week after next, spending Sunday the 22d in my old pulpit, which is now Mr. Jaggars'. He is coming to Boston to exchange with me.

I wish we could have seen you all in Boston this summer. Another year you must come here, and I shall be very glad to show you what is worth seeing in our city. You will find it not better than Philadelphia—it could not very well be that—but very different in a great many respects.

I beg you to say to Miss M—— that I congratulate her most sincerely upon her engagement and wish her every happiness. I had heard some rumor of it, but did not know of it certainly until your letter told me of it.

And now, my dear B——, I thank you again for your letter, and bid you good-by until I see you in a few weeks in your own home. Remember me most kindly to your mother and your sister, and count me always

Your friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

THE PORTRAIT OF A PARSON

By Baroness von Hutten

Author of "Beechy," "Kingamead," etc.

YOUNG Stanian was so keenly interested in the scenery that he hardly spoke as the motor toiled painfully up the road.

His ship had landed only the day before, and, having in her passage through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean met with cold unprecedented in the memory of the most travelled passenger, Colombo had presented her beautiful, glowing self to him in the bewildering guise of a splendid August day met in the middle of winter.

He was an imaginative youth, young Stanian, and his mind, beautifully vacant from care, sprang naturally towards beautiful impression, and, with a deliberation suggesting a possible dilettantism later on, he opened it and delicately focussed it on things lovely that he wished to retain, while things unlovely he half-unconsciously did not look at.

Race, the man who was showing him about, watched him from the shadow of his shabby topee, with an amused smile.

He was over forty, Race, a strong, brown man, with many lines in his face, and shrewd blue eyes. He knew—and the knowledge caused him only a kindly mirth—that to the boy he appeared a nearly old man.

For young Stanian was very young even for his twenty years. All over the island Race was called, by old and young, Jim Race, but Stanian called him "Sir," and obviously felt the man who had been at "New" with his father to be entitled to a respect that set rather well on the younger man's fresh face.

"My father sent you all kinds of messages, sir," he had said almost at the moment of meeting. And Jim Race had smiled kindly at him. And now the two had come up-country in Race's big motor, and after a night at Kandy (when the boy's intelligent, brand-new, book-fed interest in the temple had carried his companion very comfortably through the fag of his Heaven-knows-how-manyth visit to it) they were now on their way to visit some one at a bungalow up near Hatton.

The scenery is very magnificent here; the road, curving in and out in a bewildering way, clinging to the edge of the mountains, doubles on itself in a manner wearing to awakened nerves, but Race was an old hand at Ceylon roads, and young Stanian far too keen on the beauties spread before him to observe anything else.

His first emotion over growing tea was spent, and rubber-trees too had lost their thrill, but the great palms of all kinds, and the bamboos, were so beautiful that he could not gaze enough at them, and had sat for hours in silence as the splendor of the panorama grew and grew as they crawled higher and higher.

"Only about another hour," observed Race, lighting his pipe. "Just time for a bath before dinner."

"Yes," assented Stanian absently. "My word, sir, I never saw such a view!"

"Fine, is n't it? You speak French, don't you?"

"French?" The boy roused himself with an effort. "Yes. We lived at Hyères for seven years, you know, for my father's health—he had the church there."

There was always, when he said "my father," something very beautiful in his voice and his rosy young face. Race's eyes grew tender among their wrinkles as he watched him.

"I wish I could see him—I mean your father," he said presently. "It is twenty-seven years since we parted, and, as you know, the three times I have been home I have missed him."

"Yes. It is a pity." But the boy's eyes were again fixed on the rosy valley below, into which the sun, just setting behind a mountain as green to its very peak as a young salad, was riotously pouring a dozen torrents of gold.

"Mrs. Grayson is French," Race went on, "and she is always delighted to have a chance to speak her own tongue——"

"Ah, yes."

Race gave him up, and sank into communion with his pipe, and for nearly an hour the only voice to be heard was that of the motor as it struggled up an immensely long hill.

Then Race, with a wave of his hand, indicated a low white house off to their right, dimly seen through close-set, flowering trees.

"There's the bungalow," he said briefly.

What struck young Stanian the most as they went into the bungalow, after his presentation to his hostess and her very pretty daughter, was—and he himself fully felt its strangeness—not the prettiness of the daughter, but the charm of the mother, who was not, and never, owing to faults of her facial bony structure, could have been, pretty.

Mrs. Grayson was to his eyes an old woman, and she was frankly, beautifully old, with soft gray hair and slightly sallown skin; her age, instead of being denied to the onlooker, as it so usually is, seemed to be offered to him, in his beautiful youth, with gentle irony. "Yes, you are a boy," he felt it say; "and look at me. Old enough, my dear, to have been your mother. Can you bear, then, to look at me?"

It was peculiar of Mrs. Grayson that she had, as it were, an individual message for every one she met, but this Stanian could not know. It was for him quite enough that her message to him was as clear as if spoken, and unconsciously his blue eyes answered that he not only could bear to look at her in her frank ancients, but that her charm was such that it held him to the oblivion of everything else.

They went into the low, dark-beamed hall, with its long lounging chairs and rows of bookshelves, and a well-polished brown boy in spotless jacket and waist-skirt padded silently in on bare feet, to give them cool drinks in tall glasses.

"Do you play golf?" Miss Grayson asked suddenly, and Stanian started.

"I—yes—that is, rotten bad game. I always went in for tennis more. Do you? I mean to say, are you keen on golf?"

"Awfully. But we have tennis too."

She was very pretty, short and curved, and rosy with a defiance to climate that was remarkable, and wavy hair that he grudgingly admired.

But the others—her mother! Her charm for the young man was such that only the great age her gray hair assigned to her kept him from falling in love with her. She was, he knew, at least as old as his mother. Her figure, very upright and slim, was curiously boyish, and she walked like an athletic youth, but it was a beautiful figure at the same time. He watched her grave face as she talked to Race. And then, as she chanced to look his way, something happened, a sudden, involuntary flash of the eyes—he knew that it was involuntary—a faint color came to her white cheeks, and to her short upper lip a gentle quiver. It is indescribable, but the effect was marvellous.

Sydney Stanian drew a short, deep breath and forgot what he was saying to Miss Grayson. But he did not realize that what had occurred was but a faint reflection of what had in earlier days happened to very many men to their undoing. He could not tell that this plain woman with the lustrous gray hair had been in her day one of those often written-about, perhaps luckily rarely seen, women known to old days as sirens. She had been one of the most irresistible women of her age, and that in France, which means very much.

And this shadow, and flicker, and look of extreme sweetness, that struck and arrested Stanian, was what in the old time men had called her "wonderful look." Small wonder, then, that a boy of twenty should have been amazed by it.

However, his young face betrayed nothing of the momentary turmoil into which his mind was thrown, and a moment later he found himself in the pleasant room that was to be his until the early start next morning.

He was still standing by the window, looking out under the low,

bougainvillæa-hung roof, still considering his hostess, when Race, whose room was next his, opened the connecting door. The elder man had had his bath, and was brushing his sparse hair as he came in.

"I say, Stanian," he said hastily, and not looking at Stanian, who, turning vague eyes on him, waited. "I—I just thought I'd tell you," Race went on, "that—that Mrs. Grayson and I are going to be married in May."

"Married!"

Young Stanian's astonishment amused Race, thus restoring to him the coolness he had momentarily lost.

"Surprised, are you?" he laughed good humoredly. "Think we're too old? Well, we are certainly not so young as you, but—we are very happy, my boy—and——"

Stanian collected his scattered wits and said what passed for sufficient in the way of congratulation, though his words were neither many nor well-chosen.

Then Race, with the air of a man relieved of the execution of an embarrassing duty, went back to his room.

"My father," Christine Grayson told Stanian, half an hour later, in the garden, "has been dead for years. I can't remember him at all. He was a clergyman."

"Was he? So is mine."

He was young enough still greatly to enjoy coincidence, and he was vastly proud of his learned father, who was furthermore distinguished for the possession of a marvellous eloquence, a beautiful head, and his intimacy with many of the most interesting men of his time.

They walked about the beautiful garden, rich with flowering trees, watching the sudden tropical moon glow in the sky, and telling each other a variety of things about their fathers and about their young selves. The first shock of Mrs. Grayson's strange charm having died from his mind, and the announcement of her engagement—surely a thing almost ridiculous in a woman of her age—having to the young man added half a score of years to her actual ones, he found, as it were, his own youth again, and enjoyed his contemporaneity with the very pretty girl at his side.

So the two young things strolled about, awaiting the call to dinner.

It was late in the evening that it happened. That the real, wonderful thing happened.

Dinner had been a pleasant meal, remarkable for no more than its good fare and the cheerfulness of the partakers of it.

Mrs. Grayson, looking well in a white dress, was to her younger guest only a very nice, elderly woman, with charming manners. The

flash of compelling fascination that had so startled him had not come again, and he, looking at her whimsical face, had asked himself, once, if he had not been dreaming. Once, but no more, for the thing seemed to him, if not a dream, then a mirage, due possibly to the effect of the tropical heat on his own imagination, whereas pretty Christine's prettiness was a real and tangible thing, and she was his own age, not his mother's.

So they chatted and laughed, and she promised to sing for him, and he to show her his photograph book, and time passed.

At last dinner was over, and, her arm round her mother's waist, Christine led the way into the library.

"I want Mr. Stanian to see the *portrait*," the young girl said.

"It is cooler in the drawing-room, dearest——"

"But I have promised him—and we need n't stay there. Besides, Jim and I are going for a little walk——"

Race turned and smiled at her, the smile of conspirators in some pleasant mystery, and, quite obviously to Stanian, Mrs. Grayson pretended not to see the smile.

Then Race opened a door, and they went into the library.

It was a shabby, comfortable room, lined with books, and dimly lighted by one lamp.

Race, lifting the lamp, held it up over his head; thus illuminating a dark portrait that hung, in a faded gilt frame, over the mantel-piece.

"Is n't he handsome?" asked Christine proudly of Stanian.

For a moment he did not answer, and she went on: "I was only one when he died,—is n't it sad? Seventeen years ago!"

"Very handsome," murmured Stanian.

There was a short pause, and then, as Race set the lamp down on the table, thereby consigning the face above the mantel-piece to almost utter oblivion, the young girl seized his arm.

"Come along," she half whispered. "I am *dying* to see——"

When Race and the girl had gone, quitting the room by one of the open French windows, and disappearing into the shadowy garden, Stanian turned to Mrs. Grayson. "Where did you get that portrait?" he asked her.

"The portrait? It is my dear husband—Christine told you——" Her eyes were full of surprised inquiry.

He looked steadily at her for a moment, and then, his lips white, but his voice steady, he answered: "That is—a portrait of my father."

She sat down suddenly, thus bringing her face well within the radius of the lamplight. But she did not speak, and for a moment he too was silent. Then he went on inexorably: "My father married my mother twenty-five years ago. Please explain."

Even before he knew what was coming—and when it did come it

was simple enough—he admired not only her frankness, but the quickness of comprehension that showed her that only the truth would do.

"You are perfectly sure," she said, "so I'll not try to convince you that you are mistaken. Well, so he is your father? I never in my life set eyes on the original of the portrait—which I—bought at a sale in Paris years ago."

Rising, she took up the lamp and held it as Race had done a few minutes before, and young Stanian's eyes followed hers to the splendid face in the picture.

It was his father, as he could barely remember, a younger, more beautiful edition of the fine old man he had left three weeks before.

"It was painted by Grètry," commenced Mrs. Grayson, "and given, supposedly, by him to these people at whose sale—after the death of the father—the poor things raised some money on which to live. Is it very like him?"

"Very," murmured Stanian. "I never saw a better picture. Even Millais did n't quite get that look about the mouth. Is n't he," he burst out enthusiastically, "*magnificent?*"

She set down the lamp.

"He is indeed."

For a moment he stood straining his eyes in the bad light to catch another glimpse of the face he so loved and revered.

And then suddenly he remembered.

"But what does it all mean?" he cried. "Why have you said that it is a picture of your husband?"

"Oh, *that*," she returned quietly, "is my affair."

He was young and a gentleman, so for one moment her words gave him pause.

Then, because he was clever and just as well as young and a gentleman, he replied gravely, "Not altogether, Mrs. Grayson."

She had sat down again in the light, and was looking up at him with a mixture of annoyance and amusement in her face.

"What can you do if I refuse to explain?" she asked.

"Nothing. I can't, of course, force you, but—I think *we*—he and I—nodding to where his father's face was hidden by the shadows—"have a right to an explanation."

"Very well,—I admit that. And you shall have it, your explanation. It is not the portrait of my husband," she resumed, speaking for the first time, and apparently unconscious of doing so, in French, "because I never had a husband."

She still smiled as she looked at him, and in her smile was the charm that had so struck him before, a charm that drew him towards her mentally, as, he saw, she had known it would.

"The story is old," she went on, "and it would pain you. I was very young—I am only forty-four now—and I was quite alone in the world. My father was an actor, and I too went on the stage. I was not at all beautiful, but I had other things than beauty, and I had a great success. Yes, a great success. If I told you my real name, even you, young as you are, would know it. Then," she added, with a little gesture, "it happened. He was of a very old family, he could not marry me, and I did not mind. We were very happy for many years. Then—Christine came, and—it was all over. I never saw him again. But I am very glad it all happened, or there would have been no Christine. I ran away from him, from it all,—with my baby. I worked for years—taught drawing in a school at Neuilly, and then an old uncle of mine died and left me some money, and—I hate cold weather—I came out here. And before I left I went to this sale, and, seeing the portrait, bought it. It has been," she added, smiling, "worth a whole family tree,—as a guaranty. He has smoothed the way,—no one after seeing him ever doubted me for a moment. Ah, yes," she finished, turning toward the faintly outlined face over the mantel-piece, "you cannot imagine how—*grateful* I am to him."

Young Stanian stared at her helplessly.

"Yes, grateful. It is, I am convinced, owing to him that every one here has been so kind. A clergyman's widow—and such a *magnificent* clergyman—*que voulez-vous!*"

Her eyes, still turned towards the portrait, were soft with gratitude.

Stanian was now quite at a loss what to say, and he saw her grasp this and come to his rescue.

"You are wondering whether you 'ought to allow poor Race to marry' me. Ah, my child," she added, rising and laying her hand on his arm, "you wrong me. *He knows*. I have not deceived him, and we are to be married in May. He is very good to me." She was, he knew, speaking the truth, and his eyes somehow were wet with tears as he looked into her happy face.

"I—I don't know what to say," he stammered. "I am glad you have told him. But he used to know my father. Does he know the portrait is my father?"

"No; he said once that he looked very like an old friend, but he thought he"—nodding at the portrait—"was—Mr. Grayson, and since I told him he has not asked the name or, I think, thought of the likeness. He got used to it years ago. But—I shall tell him now."

The sound of voices coming towards the house ended the interview.

"Will you," Mrs. Grayson said again, laying her hand on his arm, "tell your father about it when you go home? I—should like him to know."

Young Stanian hesitated. "He—he might not like it——"

Across her face again came the marvellous look, and she smiled up at the portrait.

"Ah, my dear," she cried, "can you know him so little? Tell him, tell him, and you will see. I—I have lived with him, in this way, for eleven years, and—I *know him!* He will be glad—happy to have helped. There is in Heaven, you know," she added suddenly, beautifully serious, "more joy over one sinner——"

"Hush!" said young Stanian, half because he did not wish her to finish the old phrase, half because the voices were now very near. "You are right, he will be glad. And I will tell him."



LIGHT

BY MADISON CAWEIN

THE golden chrysalis of dawn
Breaks through its heavenly husk,
And, winged with rose, floats up and on,
Scattering with flame the dusk.

Out of what darkness daybreak brings
Its gonfalon of gold,
Inscribed with elemental things
That God has never told.

Ah, Heaven! how good it is to live,
One with abounding day!
To be no longer fugitive
On life's down-darkening way!

But, part and portion of the light,
To rise again reborn;
Beyond the shadow and the night,
Anointed of the morn.

THROUGH HOOPS OF FIRE

*By Grace MacGowan Cooke
and Caroline Wood Morrison*

“NO!” (Whatever is it that explodes in a man’s throat when he ejaculates like that?) “No! I’ll be——” Luther Sr. coughed chokingly. “I wish you’d speak to Eleanora Rose about the toast, Kate,” he snorted, breathing hard. “A rhinoceros could n’t swallow this.”

“I beg pardon, I did n’t know it was prepared for one,” I apologized.

He jumped as though I had stuck a pin in him. Luther—my Luther—the most genial of men, the most amiable of husbands, glared at me.

“I hope you’re not going to get funny,” he growled. “Shakespeare says—and I’m hanged if I don’t think he’s exactly right—that if there’s one thing makes a man tired, it’s a woman acting kittenish—or words to that effect.”

“Daddy,” Luther Jr. forced the conversation back to the starting point, “you promised to take me to see Mademoiselle Flora jump through hoops of fire.”

“Not another word, sir, not another word,” the head of the house barked so suddenly and sharply that I had hard work to convince myself it was my laughing, loving better half. “I’ve stood about enough for one morning.”

“Can’t I go?”

“No!”

“But you said you was looking forward to the circus,” persisted the boy, “and Mademoiselle”—he pronounced it “madam-weasel”—“Flora is the world’s most renowned equestrienne!”

“Leave the room, sir. You should have been at school half an hour ago.”

Luther Jr. hesitated, then went out, swinging his school satchel dejectedly. His father, gulping a last swallow of coffee, pushed back his chair and demanded:

“Kate, where’s your account book?”

“My—what?”

"Now, Kate," argued my husband, apparently giving me a chance for my life, "don't tell me you have n't any! A man who went into business at the time you set up housekeeping, and had no books to show for it, would be a pretty sight, would n't he? Housekeeping's a business, a profession. Why, bless my soul! eating's the vital turntable of life, and woman, who proposes to feed the family, does n't know the rudiments of her occupation!"

"But, Luther, I never exceed my allowance, and we've never had any reason to believe Eleanora Rose is n't honest. Why must I take up bookkeeping?" I defended.

"That's just like a woman. You never can argue with one."

"Arguments are so like quarrels." My lip trembled. The scene was drawing to an uncomfortable tension. I was dazed, bewildered. Twelve years of placid, fond wedded life had totally unfitted me for this marital storm and stress.

"That's just the way"—Luther Sr. arrayed his words like marshalled hosts. "If a man says a sensible word in his own house, it's tears and injury for his! That's what's the matter with the country—women cry too much. Men can't assert themselves; the reasonable portion of the community is submerged, drowned out!"

"Are you in business difficulties, dear?" I groped after elucidation.

"It'll come to that," he groaned. "Everything's going to the dogs. I lost two of my best customers yesterday. And you'd want a new hat and a band-wagon to go to the poor-house in—I know you would—that'd be just like a woman."

He made a sorry pretense of jesting, but I saw plainly that he was in bitter earnest.

"Have I been extravagant?" I asked tremulously.

"Have you? Have you?" he inquired testily. "Now, Kate, I'll leave it to you. No account book, and encouraging that boy to buy circus tickets! Oh, the way this house is run is enough to drive a man crazy!"

"It would seem so," I plucked up spirit to retort.

Luther jerked himself to his feet, overturning his chair, and stalked out of the dining-room. For the first time in twelve years he failed to kiss me good-by.

A sibilant sniffing brought me about, facing the rear entrance.

"Well, Eleanora Rose?" I interrogated the ebony Niobe in the door frame.

"Miss Kate, I gotter go home," my cook wailed. "I jess gotter. Dat niggah man what married me 'fore de preacher in a white dress an' a ring, in de most reg'lar way, done gone an' tuck up wid a yaller gal, an' dey's movin' inter my rooms!"

"Surely not!"

"Yas'm, dey is. I yeared tell o' her 'splainin' how she gwine run my sewin'-machine wid 'lectricity when she get her han' in!"

"Your sewing-machine?"

"Mebbe he done buyed de machine—I ain't 'sputin' dat—but I took my fryin'-pan right outen dis yere kitchen—you 'members yore little un wid de long handle what you been 'quirin' 'bout an' I borried? Mebbe you ain't 'knowledgin' I borried it, but you'd know de skillet. Well, dey ain't gwine hab dat. I's cooked my lub too many a meal outen dat little pan! Miss Kate"—she mopped her eyes with her dress skirt—"I's gotter go home an' sort out my things 'fore dey moves in."

Poor creature! Her trouble was very real to her. Who was I to call it crude and grotesque? I gave her leave to go home and sort out her things before the new wife moved in.

A painful suspicion that under the veil of flesh women are builded of the same fibre and liable to the same injuries stole in on me. Poor Eleanora Rose! Were all men, too, of similar fibre? Did they all tire of sameness and monotony? Would the white man endorse, if he dared, the elastic morality of the negro, who committed practical bigamy with prayer and feasting? It was n't a pleasant subject.

Worried and distraught, I was setting about righting the house, when a neighbor, wife of Luther's best friend, came running in the side way.

"Oh, Kate—dear Kate—will it make any difference with us?" she cried, throwing herself on my neck.

"Have the chickens been at your green peas again?" I gasped.

"Has n't Mr. Anderson told you? Oh, you must n't hold it against us—we don't know what caused it——"

"It?" I repeated. "What it?"

With that, George's Lydia sat down and expounded to me with solemn eyes.

"You know Mr. Anderson is always so lucky in games, but last night George checkmated him in four games, and Mr. Anderson threw the chessmen on the floor and said George's playing was worse than the methods of Wall Street! He rushed off in such a temper! Did n't he tell you? He would n't stay for the rarebit—you know we were to have come over and got you for that, but I would n't let George, after what was said. Was I wrong? How did Mr. Anderson seem when he got home?"

I felt myself whiten. Luther had not returned the night before until after midnight, an unprecedented hour in village experience. I put on a deceptive front to George's Lydia. Stiff as my lips grew, I managed to murmur, "Oh, about as usual. If he'd been really angry, I'm sure Luther would have mentioned it. Maybe it was one of his

jokes. I'm glad you happened over just now, though; it's quite time to discuss a new list for the Book Club."

Lydia's baby-blue orbs assumed phenomenal solemnity. She fluttered her fingers like young birds on a trial flight.

"There's a book I want," she began with the tone she always reserves for Book Club affairs. "It's by a poet—a colored poet, I think—the one who wrote—oh, I forget the name of the poem I remember, but it's about a man who's talking with his wife and tells her she's his precious picture and he'd save her first if the house was on fire, and that Flora or Ffine, some girl at the circus or fair, who began with F, was only a chromo who appealed by her infinite variety. There was a circus in town, and the chromo girl was in it—you can see how fine it must be from the parts I've quoted."

"Perhaps you mean Browning's 'Ffine at the Fair,'" I suggested.

Lydia nodded energetically, much impressed by her own power to recognize the name. "Browning," she repeated. "I knew it was a color. They say he's very deep; but, you see, I understand one of his poems already."

By praising my little neighbor's literary acumen, I was enabled to bring her around to my own way of thinking as to Luther's tantrum.

"I dare say Mr. Anderson was n't well last night," she murmured as she prepared to leave.

"He's been acting ill of late," I punned gravely.

"He did seem awfully nervous. Maybe it's indigestion;" and she fluttered homeward to prepare him a cup of bran coffee.

The bran coffee arrived at supper, and Luther's reception of the neighborly kindness would have been classifiable as "unfit for print." I was glad I had given Luther Jr. permission to spend the night with a schoolmate.

"I'm going out," Luther Sr. announced, when he had minced at his plate and complained of everything on the table and in the universe. "No, I don't know what time I'll be back. For the Lord's sake, don't ask me! Can't I turn around without advertising it? Beats all if a man has to relinquish every atom of personal liberty when he marries. You'd think the preacher was a criminal judge, and had sentenced him to state's prison."

"Oh, no, not to Sing Sing—only to sing small," I tried to jest. "Besides, I did n't ask you what time you were coming home."

"You thought it!" he fairly bellowed. "You always do! All women do!"

He started towards me with a such a lowering brow, I fairly dodged; but he only caught me half savagely by the arms, gave my cheek a gritted-teeth kiss, and groaned hollowly. The bran coffee must have had some virtue.

"Try to get over your pet, Katharine, and be a little better natured, if you can, when I do get back," he advised as he stamped out of the house.

I went to my desk to work on the Book Club list. As I came back through the hall a dignified visitor appeared to me at the front door. It was Cousin Atwell Lee, village banker and man of importance. I ushered him into the parlor and made a light. Cousin Atwell sat stiffly on the edge of one of my parlor chairs. With some formality, he hoped that the pleasant relations which had hitherto existed between our respective families might not be impaired by "the recent unpleasant occurrence."

Thirteen years before Cousin Atwell Lee had sat on the edge of a parlor chair in my mother's house and in the same cautiously attuned tones advised me against marrying a city man of whose antecedents I was ignorant.

"There is always the danger of a previous entanglement," he had warned. "Mr. Anderson is not a young man; he has spent his life in cities."

The ominous emphasis on the plural, "cities," abode with me, a vague menace, during the first years of my married life. It came back like a shadow across memory as Atwell in his broadcloth again stiffened on my best chair.

"We have served Mr. Anderson to the best of our ability," Cousin Atwell remarked pompously, "yet this morning, because the cashier hesitated over paying a rather large check entirely in silver, Mr. Anderson threatened to sever his connection with our bank and transact business in the future through the Jacksonville National."

"I'm awfully sorry"—I forced myself to natural speaking, trying to hold the hour in sanity. "I don't know a thing about Luther's business arrangements. He has n't told me if he intends changing his bank. Probably it'll blow over. How is Cousin Sara Belle?"

"Is Mr. Anderson in?"

The question took on importance from its abruptness. I felt the blood in my face as I answered with a negative.

"Do you expect him soon?"

Now, during the strange, stormy week that stretched behind me like a bad dream Luther had been coming home at uncertain hours, but always late.

"I—I don't know," I stammered.

Atwell Lee's eyes betrayed commiseration and a little smug satisfaction, as though the I-told-you-so of the maternal side of his house boiled under his smooth, bald pate.

"I—ah—I met Mr. Anderson walking in the direction of Jacksonville a short time ago," he informed me, lowering his eyes that said more.

On both our consciousnesses lay the couchant knowledge that a circus from one of those "cities" was in Jacksonville, with all its blatant wickedness.

I tried to throw off any morbidness. After all, though Luther was a good deal of a big boy, he was not likely to make a long journey afoot. I had faith in his flesh.

"I'll use my influence with him," I promised Atwell as I ushered him out. "I don't think he'll change his bank."

For hours after my cousin's departure I sat by the window, thinking. Why did my husband consider withdrawing his money from the local bank? Why did he stare at me like that and groan? What took him from home of nights? The whirling questions confused me into a dreary apathy, and I dozed heavily. I was awakened by the clock striking twelve. A few moments later Luther's step crossed the hall and ascended the stair. Opposite my door I heard him stumble over a hassock and mutter, "Not a thing in the house in its place!" He who had praised my housekeeping, declaring I made a haven of rest for him and the boy!

Had he been to Jacksonville, five miles distant? The hour, the empty room, the silence, appalled me. Ugly thoughts creep in with shadows; therefore Guardian Angels close the eyes of the blessed in sleep.

Verily the day had been pregnant with instances of man's weakness. The poem which George's Lydia had "quoted" and which I had reread that night, poor Eleanora Rose's experience, Cousin Atwell's expression as he stiffened on my best chair and put the interrogation, "Is Mr. Anderson in?"—all these things returned like vultures to peck at Luther's recent behavior. Tears poured over my cheeks. I felt hysterical cries rising to my lips.

"But it's all impossible—it's me—I'm not well," I tried to reason. "Plainly the one thing to do is to talk frankly with Luther and tell him how unhappy he's making me."

I smiled at myself for not reaching this solution earlier in the day. Late as it was, I climbed the stairs. Luther was lying on the uncomfortable bed-lounge, the reading lamp yet alight at his head; there was a tragic transposition of blankets. As I paused, hesitating, he seemed to feel a disturbing presence, flung a great arm boyishly over his head, and groaned, "Oh, blame it all!"

I went softly back to the room below, shaking with nervous heart-ache. No sane woman would seek a man in such a mood to ask him if he still loved her.

I had my own breakfast to prepare in the morning. Eleanora Rose had intercepted the milkman and sent me word that she would be back by noon. The yellow girl who disturbed her domestic peace

had been "sorted out of her household things" and carried home in an ambulance. The man in the case was "resting easy," and Eleanor Rose thought she could leave him safely and return to her duties. "But he won't be takin' up wid no mo' yaller gals till de swellin' done gone outen his haid," she had said to the milkman.

Luther Jr. ran in a moment to get his school lunch and whisper, "Oh, mamma, don't you s'pose I can go to the circus?"

I kissed my boy and gave him two pieces of cake, but the assurance he so longed for was not in my power to bestow. Luther Sr. came down late. Dark circles enlarged his eyes, his cheeks looked puffy and pale, his hands shook. He began to pace the dining-room with swift, nervous strides. I saw his fingers grope in one pocket and another, his expression increasing in ferocity with the fruitless search. To open an amiable conversation, I remarked:

"Looking for a cigar? Is the box empty again?"

"I've quit smoking." He wheeled and scowled at me like the villain in a cheap melodrama.

A flood of light poured in on me with the words. Luther's strange actions, the sudden crazy temper of a kindly, sweet-natured man, these were but the results of tortured nerves and sleeplessness. He had been trying to give up his tobacco. If I had only known! In the new light of this knowledge I went over his unreasonable actions, his mad speeches, and pardoned them every one.

"It was a bad example for the kid. I promised you I'd stop twelve years ago, when we were married, Kate, and I always keep my promises—if you give me time. I've got to quit for the boy's sake, Kate—don't you see I've got to?" He stood looking at me, with restless fingers and trembling lip, but game, every inch of him, my Luther.

"I—I don't know whether I want you to keep that promise or not," I faltered, remembering the past weeks, and wondering if I could bear any more such. "Maybe you can't quit, Luther." I brought that last out in a cowardly small voice that was almost a whisper.

"Can't quit?" he roared. "Can't quit—me?"

I shrank away from his violence. He saw it and looked a trifle abashed.

"I would n't speak like that to you, Kate," he mumbled, "if you did n't drive me to it with your nagging."

He glanced at me furtively; his hands still shook, and it was pitiful to see how white he was. I forgave him as he went on:

"I—I hate to say it, Katharine, but you've got to be a regular shrew here lately. I've been wondering if you were sick or anything. Is your liver out of order, do you think?"

My liver—*my* liver! I looked at him and choked on the words I

wanted to speak. I dared not tell him that the fault was all his. I saw he was in no frame of mind to bear it. I began to cry, and then out tumbled the story of George's Lydia, of Cousin Atwell Lee; even Eleanora Rose received honorable mention. Before I had come anywhere near an end he had me in his big arms, my tired head down in its old, comfortable resting place on his broad shoulder. "Poor little woman—poor little woman," he kept saying over and over. "What a brute I've been—what a great sore-headed bear!"

"No, no," I sobbed, catching his coat lapels and trying to shake him as I stared into the eyes above me. "No, no, Luther. But I don't want you to try to quit smoking if it makes you feel so dreadful you just can't help hating me along with the other folks. I forgave you your promise long ago—you can take it back, dear; but I can't get along without your love—I must have it—I must know you love me every day—I must hear you say it, and see you look it."

"Well, well, well," said Luther as he stroked my hair tenderly, and there was no doubt about the look he bent upon me then. I warmed myself in it, and suddenly realized what a poor shivering soul I had been, for weeks, on the edge of a frozen purgatory.

"Never again, Luther," I whispered; "never again."

"Never again," he echoed stanchly, but with a twist to the meaning. "I'll never smoke another cigar, Kate. Bless my little woman! Married twelve years and cares as much as that for her old man's love. A fellow that could n't quit smoking for such a girl *would* be a chump."

He glanced at the clock with a comical mixture of sheepishness and triumph. "Good Lord!" he said. "It's after ten. I have n't thought about a smoke, to want one, for an hour. I guess the strike's broke." Then, quite in his natural voice, "Say, Katinka, shall we take Luther Jr. out of school in the afternoon or keep him up at night to see 'Madam-weasel' Flora jump through hoops of fire?"



TO THE RAIN IN THE CITY

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

RAIN-DROPS falling from the skies,
Tiny tears from Nature's eyes,
Falling on a city street,
Little Rain-drops, indiscreet,
Why not seek some spot afar
Where the thirsty flowers are?

THE CONFIDANT

By Elizabeth Maury Coombs



I.

"IT'S Christmas in Virginia," said the boy to himself, in that conversational tone one acquires so soon when living alone on the prairies, "and I'll bet it's only December twenty-fifth here in Texas." He tucked the pillow more tightly under his head and tried for another nap.

The sun glared through the unshaded window of the shack. A bath-robe, his mother's latest gift, had been hung over it as a curtain, but, a norther coming up in the night, he had sleepily adopted the robe as a blanket. And now he lay making a pretense with himself of being still asleep, his bony feet stuck far into the blue and white sleeves, the blue border barely reaching his chest, his long arms across his eyes. The relentless wind of the norther still rattled everything rattleable in the shanty, turned the leaves of the book he had been reading, now slowly, now fast and faster, like an impatient human hand hunting a lost passage; waved the unbleached cloth ceiling up and down, then ran along all its length in ripples, like wind on a restless sea.

"Christmas again," he sighed, opening his eyes, "and the rose-leaves dropping on the porch, but always so durned dry they remind me of artificial ones," he drawled, almost without moving his lips. "Was it only last Christmas I met her, or was it about the time I was a cave-dweller mighty near a million years ago—that I knew that Nancy-girl?" He smiled faintly. "It must have taken me one lifetime, at least, to have made such an infernal failure of everything—and yet folks say we Virginians are slow! Maybe so, and still I defy any of these fellows to work hard one year and at the end leave themselves without a leg to stand on, as Grandpa used to say about run-down race-horses.

"Let's take account o' stock; it won't be a long column, except on one side. First, last, and all the time—girl's gone, or as good as gone. When Blink Taylor sells that hundred and thirty-five thousand gallons of oil, she'll take him, of course, and that lets me out, even if the drouth does n't come this year—which it will. But I'm going to put in my crop again, just to see if even a Texas drouth will be mean enough to ruin a man without even the hope of a Nancy-girl to hitch body and

soul together. Then that crop of alfalfa—six weeks like the fields of Virginia; then dry; then dusty-dry and crackling like burning thorns under the pony's feet, as, without a speck of hope, I still rode over to the Circle Dot Ranch to see that Nancy-girl. 'T was her father advised me to put the last of my money into the ground, but 't was n't by his advice I struck that measly little trickle of water—he advised me to strike a stream of six thousand gallons a day. He seemed to think that even if a fellow *was* named Tazewell, he might some time twist the tail of Destiny. But every time I tried, the old thing manipulated her own tail and swallowed one more hope. Durn her old hide! She's *full* of hope by this time, I reckon; and one of the hopes in her completely furnished interior is those seventeen thoroughbred Holstein cattle of mine, that ate up all the cactus on this ranch. Never mind; they made a mighty dry breakfast for the buzzards that walk like little old women in dingy black wrappers around the water-holes—the joke's not always on me; sometimes it's on the other buzzards!

"That cotton crop was ahead of my other ventures in one way—it was far and away the biggest fool thing I ever did do. Cotton grows on a spool in Virginia, and the boll-weevil never touches it. Oh, yes, I'm from Virginia—oh, yes, I'm slow—slow as the cat eatin' the grubbin' hoe! Anybody with a second-hand simile and no immediate use for it puts it on a Virginian, just trims the fringe off its cuffs and slips the collar over our heads, and durn my skin if they don't fit us every time! Yet in one year I've closed a lot of deals—'most all I had. I've made permanent investments; I want my money where I can see it, and here it all is—right in view on the Sunlit Ranch!"

Getting up, the boy dragged his long length to the window. The grizzled coyote dog roused himself from under the bed and yawningly mumbled his master's hand.

"William," exclaimed the boy, with a laugh of pure fondness, "William Wagtail, Esquire, I wish you a mighty merry Christmas, and if canned plum-pudding can add a whit to your earthly bliss, why, it's yours this day—but not for breakfast, man of my heart, not for breakfast! Why, William, you'd have gout! That's what I've been dreading this long time for folks of our full-fed habit! Those soda biscuit I mix for us each morning—why, those biscuits would tempt Providence, dog-man—in fact, they do. I know it!

"You flew in the face of Providence yourself, William-dog, when you took to the heels of a Virginian—you linked yourself with the lazy, William-fool-dog. Never mind, old fellow, every dog like a bone." The boy laughed as he looked at his lean brown arms and struggled into his blue flannel shirt.

Then Tazewell went out to the lean-to kitchen and began to rattle the pans. Suddenly he paused. "William," he said, biting his under-

lip, "ain't you glad we ain't at home in Virginia to Christmas breakfast? Because, you know, you foolish old coyote, they'd have batter-bread and fried chicken, and then we'd be sure to get foundered! Glad? Why, I'm so durned glad I could cry; because if we were there, you other miserable old, half-starved Texas dog, we'd split our skins!"

Building the smoky fire out of twisted mesquit roots, he cooked the bacon, made the inevitable soda biscuits, and then boiled the coffee, talking always to the dog, who never took his eyes from his master, but wagged his tail in constant applause.

After he had stacked his dishes, the boy turned to the flea-bitten pony. As he let down the bars of the corral, "Hard Times," he said, "this place is yours; you are master of the situation and lord of all you survey. I've made up my mind to leave you. It's been a hard struggle with me to do this, because I love you like a brother-in-law, for you are as handsome as a cocoa-fibre door-mat and as sweet-tempered as a maiden aunt. But I reckon if my stomach was as full of cactus-thorns as yours is, I'd make some right pointed remarks, too. You'll find buried treasure all about the place. There's a thousand dollars in the well when you need money; but 't ain't worth while to say 'please' to me—I am going to escape with this perfectly good old set of jointed bones that I have left of myself, before I put a ninety days' note on it. I am going north with that ship-load of oil. Blink Taylor said he'd give me five dollars a day to go with him to sell it in New England.

"Oh, yes, William-dog, Blink struck the oil! He's going to make the money—and he's going to get the Nancy-girl. I'm not going to see her any more—came too near assisting nature in making a fool of myself last time; but oh, little gray brother, how could I help it when the collar of that faded blue linen dress had been turned under some way and I saw her skin was as white as the cherry-blooms at home? Her face all tan with the Texas sun, and her eyes blue like the chicory flowers that used to grow down on the spring-house hill, 'way back in Virginia. I could have stood it all, William-dog, but, durn your old mangy hide! her hair is all in yellow plaits, with big, soft curls at the end!"

Suddenly the boy sat down on the curb of the cracked cistern and put his hands over his face. The grizzled old dog licked his master's long fingers, and his wet pink tongue rested a moment on the crisp, sun-browned black hair; then, with a sigh, he threw himself down, to fix on Tazewell his gold-flecked eyes, indelibly writ with the sorrows of all the ages.

After a time the boy looked up. "But what can you expect of a man of my age—twenty-three the first of April, a regular April fool—when those little curls on her temples come twisting 'round, trying to

get in her eyes? Oh, plague take you, dog! I am a fool, am I? You said so, you old mongrel, and I let you know I don't give a darn for your opinion—because it's mine, too; so I know it's not worth a darn. How can I help being a Virginian? I was born that way one first of April—and the joke was on me. Is it my fault I was sent down here to live on dust and despair, like a Texas horned frog? Is it my fault I can't ask my Nancy-girl to take my old carcass and feed it to the buzzards if she don't want it? My fault, is it, when I know Blink Taylor will court her as soon as he gets the money for the oil? My fault he has better luck—that is, better sense—than I have? He's a fine old fellow, too, and he shall court her, and he shall have her, and if I step down and out, why, I myself—just an old no-'count Tazewell from Virginia—will be giving her what life holds for her. So here goes it!"

II.

"It's April in Virginia," said the boy, as he crossed the track after leaving the dirty little train; and then, looking at the prairies in their spring-time inflorescence, "and I'll be durned if it ain't April here, too!"

The man at the little Texas station was anxious to stop him for news, and offered to lend him a pony to ride to his ranch, but he seemed in a hurry to get on, though evidently he was tired and the lines in his thin face were more sharply drawn than ever.

"No, I thank you, suh," he answered absently; "I'm not going home to-night. I shall stay all night at the Circle Dot Ranch."

William Wagtail, now fat and sophisticated, slouched at his heels. A jack-rabbit loping along the landscape would hardly have tempted him from the road. The prairies spread like a Turkish carpet before him; the water-holes were paler pieces of sky fallen into the vivid blue of the buffalo clover; the deep red wine-cups dipped at every passing breeze; even the cactus carried its incongruous blossoms. Away to the west, by an old water hole, a clump of trees carried on each branch their red and yellow blossoms; the wind stirred them, and they seemed to wave their crimson wings and tip up on their toes to fly. Beyond in the mesquit grove, he saw the red roof and the towering windmill of the Circle Dot, and, addressing the dog for the first time, he sighed, "William, I see the house of *his* Nancy-girl."

The girl was standing at the corral as Tazewell came up, and turned to greet him coldly, as had been her later habit. The dogs at the Circle Dot came out with loud-voiced enthusiasm to greet William, who, being of a retreating nature, tore through the aguarita bushes, dodging behind clumps of cactus, till he made his way home to the Sunlit Ranch. There he sat on the back step and joined the coyote chorus until morn-

ing. And here Tazewell found him, shivering and whimpering, while he bit and licked a badly torn paw, full of prickly pear thorns.

The boy put his arms around the dog's neck. Taking out his knife, he tenderly pulled out the thorns. "William, poor old man, they said you ran away from those old dogs of theirs, but I knew better after a while, William-dog. I knew you didn't want to intrude on what I was going to say to the Nancy-girl. But let me tell you this, William—I was a man, and I told her just what I came back to tell her. Want me to tell you all about it? Well, I see you don't, so I will. But first, here"—reaching in his pocket, he brought out a bundle rolled in a napkin, which he unrolled and gave to the dog.

"Bread, you old scoundrel! She made it—any way, she sent it, and she rolled it up herself for you—you old son of a gray coyote—and meat!"

William snuffed airily, turned it over with his nose, ate the meat condescendingly, carried the bread out by a group of ragged banana-plants growing under the tank, and buried it, patting the loose dirt down carefully with his nose. Then he stretched himself on the damp earth; and so did the boy, looking up at the cloudless sky through the broad leaves whipped to ragged green ribbons by the unresting wind, obedient always to its will, every tatter drooping at its ebb and flaunting at its flow.

It was some time before Tazewell spoke: "William-dog-man, why, I told that Nancy-girl everything—told her how I went up on the oil-ship with Blink Taylor; told her he was the finest fellow in the world—and that's no lie; told her all about getting there at night and anchoring in the harbor because we could n't deliver the oil till morning. We were 'way up in New England, man, where they would call you a wolf and put you in a Sunday park to scare their little children with! I told her how I went on shore that night, like a blamed fool, when I ought to have stayed on the ship, where Taylor stayed, and got the chance to be a hero. Right then I put in an oar for him. I put it into myself, and it hurt, too, old gray dog!

"I believe in my soul you're asleep"—pulling one limp ear until the dog turned over and yapped sleepily. "I say, William, in the language of one of your namesakes, 'Lend me your ears.' Don't you hear me talking? Then, durn you, why don't you wag your tail? Have you been so much with town folks you wait for a flea to bite you before you sit up and take any interest in the conversation? I told her all about it, coyote dog. I went in about three o'clock on one of the little boats. It was dark, but I was mighty glad to get on something that laid still. Then I went up the cobbled street to stretch my legs—not that they look like they needed it. I came back to the dock about four, I reckon. There's a cold wind up there, Texas dog, that blows 'long

about dawn. No, they have none for export to Texas—it's all incorporated. It's mighty still 'long about that time—night noises going to sleep and day ones not waked up. I sat there, old man, and thought over my sins, and in that way came right near going to sleep. The ships that were anchored below creaked their chains like they had half a mind to go 'way, and the water went lap-lap against the wharf, like an old cat drinking milk—there, I thought that would wake you! I had been looking 'round at the gray ghost ships tied there, mostly big pleasure boats—for those New Englanders are great on taking pleasure, if they do take it hard—when I happened to cast my eye on our old travel-stained hulk, and, oh, Lord, dog! up from the very middle of her curled a thin trail of blue smoke, as peaceful like as when I was a little boy sent after the cows in Virginia, and would see old Aunt Susan's smoke from the kitchen go up and know I would smell bacon frying when I got back to the cuppen bars.

"That blue smoke, William-dog, curled up and up, while I sat there like a half-asleep fool, watching it and thinking of Aunt Susan's breakfasts 'way back in the mountains. Then the dawn wind caught it and blew it thin and thin like mist. And then—oh, the devil!" said the boy, sitting up suddenly, "the first tank of that oil went off like the boom of a cannon, and the boat was all afire! I ran for the dock then like a crazy fool, and there in the light of the fire, against the black bulk of the ship, stood Taylor on the deck, directing the men who swarmed down the sides to safety, like bees hangin' from the hives, as they do in dog-days; while up from the body of the boat great big, rounded, purple-black worlds of smoke were pouring, rolling over and over each other, and I heard somebody screaming like a fool and I knew after a while 't was me, as a great, long, yellow snake of fire shot up in the blackness, and the smaller ones crawled 'round the deck almost to Taylor's feet, as he stood there like a hero—no, that's too tame a word for him—like a *man*;" and now the boy's voice sank in the tone of tribute.

"As he came down the ladder, last of all, the sheets of flame shot up in the darkness and the breeze flapped them in the firelit smoke; for one half heart-beat, the wind turned the smoke away, and the bones of our old ship stood bleached and bare against the black oil smoke. Then the whole world was one blaze, and the little pointed, grassy hills around the harbor caught the light of it, and seemed just like the hills at home—all gilded, when the yellow broom is in bloom. Those old black New England rocks frowned down on us, and the tawny beach ran round their feet like the muddy creeks in Virginia. Then the little tugs gathered to tow her from the shore; her feet in the running water and her head in the burning sky, and in that black, oily water below her the fire snakes curled and writhed; reared their crested heads

to the waves and played hellish games with each other, like a herd of red twisting devils in the caves of that inky sea.

"By that time Taylor's boat came in, and I ran to meet him. I'm ashamed for even you to know it on me, gray dog, but my throat felt like yours did that time you swallowed the whole pone of corn-bread—and did n't swallow it, either, and I reckon I must have gotten some of that infernal oil smoke in my eyes, too. Taylor jumped on the dock, and says he to me, as cheerful as a cricket, 'Well, Kid, did you get to town in time to see the fireworks?' Then the Mayor came up—for all the people were out there by that time—and said he:

"'I'm very sorry, sir, that this misfortune should have befallen you in our harbor. Do you suspect the fire to have been incendiary?'

"'No, suh, nary one,' said Taylor, laughing. 'I suspect maybe 't was spontaneous combustion. You know you fellers have all been sayin' us Texans would swell up an' bust some day. While we ain't swelled much to speak on, we have most surely busted.'

"The old crazy thing tried to keep his part he played in the game out of the papers, because he said he did n't want any of those ready-to-wear kisses women sometimes dealt out to heroes! And he would n't come back to see Miss Nancy and tell her about it, so I did it, William, without asking him, because I knew he did care. So I said to her—and now look a' here, William, I'm getting to the part that ain't going to interest you much, because you ain't going to hear it—so I said, kind o' careless-like, 'Miss Nancy, won't you write to old Taylor and tell him you care for him—and—lots of those nice things girls know how to say to the man they—er—care for—I reckon,' and then—oh, William, old gray William, fool-dog, she said she never had loved him, and I said, 'But he's such a splendid old fellow, and he's worthy even of you, because he's a hero;' and she said she 'was n't addicted to heroes—she preferred hers in book-form.' And then I said something to her that horses nor mules could n't have dragged out of me if I had n't seen poor old Taylor's game was up. William, get up and listen, for this is 'most the last word you'll hear from me on the subject."

William arose with that, stretched his hind-legs a most unparalleled length from his front ones, and grinned as he gave a wide pink and white yawn.

"I said," murmured the boy, looking into the dog's gold-flecked eyes—"I said I loved her, and she said—William, I'll never, never tell you whether she said she loved me or not, because you would enjoy yourself too much. You remember once upon a time a little dog swallowed a tooth-brush, and it tickled him to death. But she said—I'll tell you this much she said—she said I had been born an April fool, and it had gotten chronic with me; so it all amounts to the same

thing, now, does n't it, dog of sense? Go on away, dog, go on away and hunt your fleas; 'tain't a bit of use to try and lick my face. I ain't agoin' to tell you what I did then!"



THE CARDINAL

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

I N the breezy blue of the April weather,
When each sun-ray seemed a golden blade,
I caught the gleam of a crimson feather
Deep in a forest glade.

There was just the hint of the rathe out-breaking
Of beryl buds on the beechen boughs,
And a rosier glint on the maples making
Their whispered vernal vows.

Then sudden the gleam grew a glowing vision
Of shimmering wing and of shining breast,
As though from out of some realm elysian
Had fluttered this feathered guest;—

A radiant spirit with song for guerdon,
A plaintive, penetrant, minor strain,
Yet one that bore no quavering burden
Of human want or pain.

Just the voice of the April weather,
With its faint but passionate under-thrill,
That told of the tide of the loosened tether,
And the reawakened will.

Then the bird was gone, with its song and splendor,
Adown a waft of the April wind,
Yet a something stirring, a something tender,
Was left in its flight behind.

Both to eye and to ear had it clearly spoken,
Bidding the heart of a wanderer know
That the bond of beauty is never broken
As the Aprils come and go.

JENKINS OF THE APPLEBY "SCIMITAR"

By *Will Levington Comfort*

Author of "Routledge Rides Alone"

THE *Montic* was passing the Farralones, outward bound, when I noted for the first time the gaunt, rangy figure of Jenkins. He was pacing the promenade in a fur-lined coat of marvelous size and texture. His square-toed shoes were sumptuous in proportion and workmanship, and his tread soft, swift, and solid. He wore his hair rather longer than we do in the East, and a broad-brimmed felt, carelessly tweaked to a Copley peak. The afternoon was gray, and the fresh young ruffian of a gale seemed breath of life to him. I was fascinated by his wholesome homeliness, as I have always been by the angular profile of Lincoln.

It was early in 1904, and there were fifteen American and English war-correspondents aboard, the *Montic* being the first ship out after the declaration of hostilities between Russia and Japan. Practically the entire party was gathered in the smoking-room the first night, when Jenkins entered. Recent wars were being overhauled by men who knew every cog of the game. Jenkins listened with attention. When there was a lull he observed lightly:

"Gentlemen, my name is Andrew Jenkins. I represent the Appleby *Daily Scimitar*, and I'm mighty pleased to make your acquaintance."

There was another lull. Plainly, the English were disturbed, and rather inclined to stare down the intrusion. Then Spicer of New York, who had probably caught the same droll point of light in the Jenkins eye that made the moment rare to me, jumped up, introduced himself, and conducted the *Scimitar* envoy about the compartment. As Jenkins gripped each one of those fifteen right hands, Spicer, hopping about him, would chirp:

"This is Mr. Jenkins of the Appleby *Daily Scimitar*."

Introductions filed, the scribes began to ask the Westerner questions—if they still carried guns in Appleby; how far was Appleby from the railroad; how many men did the *Scimitar* propose to put

into the field; how many angels could stand on the point of the *Scimitar*? . . .

"Have a good time, you fellows," Jenkins remarked finally, his good nature not in the least disturbed. "Only let me fire one question—which one of you represents the greatest newspaper?"

No one answered.

"I'll bet that at least a dozen of you fellows believe, without the quiver of a doubt, that your own is the greatest newspaper, and you are all right; but none of you can dispute with me. The Appleby *Scimitar* (daily except Sunday, circulation guaranteed, advertising rates furnished on request) is the smallest paper represented here. Still, we have an expense account. Let's open some nice bottles of wine around—and be good."

So the temperature was adjusted, and there was not a little richness in that evening. . . . It is useless to deny that Jenkins attracted me. There was white-man stuff in the great, lean, unsmiling mouth; and it pleased me to imagine that there was crude force in his brain comparable to the strength of his huge, brown, bony hand. With a queer blend of humor and confidence, he presently outlined for me the realities of his story. His father, of recent death, had been Mayor and principal capitalist of Appleby.

"There were lots pleasanter men than my father," Andrew told me. "Father rather expected all with whom he dealt to prove paying investments. You see, he was a tanner—tanned hides for fifty years, not forgetting my own on occasion. Now, I would n't object to being the next Mayor of Appleby, and Governor later, but I'm not going to spend fifty years getting there—so I started out here."

"I don't quite follow the campaign tactics," I said.

"It was old Bob Kramer, editor of the *Scimitar*, who put it into my head. 'Go to Japan and write me news letters from the tumultuous far East, Andrew,' he said. 'It's nearly a year before the primaries. I can feature you as sitting cool on some Japanese headland, observing clashing armies on one hand, and the smoke-hung, thundering fleets on the other. The *Scimitar* controls the party, boy, and I can make you blow into the city hall like the breeze from your tannery.'

"I juggled the idea," Jenkins added, "but told the old man that war-correspondence was a little out of my line. 'Forget it, boy,' he said. 'You can paint the things as you see 'em.' Finally I promised to brush up on commas and colons and capitals on ship-board. 'Never mind about the commas, Andy,' he remarked. 'Them's my tools. Give me facts and color from the front, and I'll make your stuff look like a bed of red coals, with here and there a pillar of fire rising.' . . . So I'm off here to heroize while the *Scimitar* disinters the pasts of the other candidates."

The first night in Tokyo Jenkins had the honor to meet Sir Damon Walpole, Bart. The product of the Western States had mixed only with chance-bred folk up to this time. This scion of registered stock was to him therefore something like a Yosemite or a Niagara at close range. I regarded it strange that each of these diverse types appeared to fancy the other from the beginning; strange also that none of the English knew Sir Damon. Any way, Andrew cut the baronet out of the herd and branded him for his own. Moreover, he was shown Tokyo thoroughly and until dawn by the British nobleman.

"I was a little skittish when we first hooked up," Jenkins confided to me, "but when Damie discovered that he had left his wallet back in the hotel and borrowed fifty *yen*, I closed easy against the collar and caught my stride. Say, is a baronet a little baron?"

It is needless to reiterate here how the correspondents were detained in Tokyo that winter and spring. Men who had letters from presidents and prime-ministers, bales of credentials and medals for services past, clamored in vain for the field. Jenkins had merely the passport of a United States citizen and a bundle of Cook's circular notes. It took him just ten weeks to learn that one Jenkins of the Appleby *Daily Scimitar* was n't down even for standing-room on the right-hand side of the throne of war; so he took Sir Damon and a certain young inspiration of his own to Chifu, where I had already been relegated. We three foregathered at a certain table in the billiard-room of the Shantung Hotel, and Jenkins divulged the following:

"I propose to take matters in my own hands. We are now less than eighty miles from Port Arthur. Note that, Walpole, Bart.—the point upon which the world's eyes are glued! We'll charter a Chinese junk, move discreetly across into riled waters, sneak through Togo's blockade, and enter the fortress."

"Assuredly, Andrew," said Sir Damon, clapping for a Chinese servant and ordering a bottle of wine. "Quite right, dear boy. If Admiral Togo does n't blow us out the water, assuredly we shall enter the fortress, where the bliddy Russians will shoot us for spies."

I noted that Jenkins now tolerated but impatiently suggestions from the other. "Bosh, Wallie!" he said. "Shoot a British nobleman and an American capitalist out of the water? They'd find themselves at war with England and America."

"Most interesting complication—four great powers locked in a death struggle," I observed.

"Being blown out of the bliddy water, we should n't see it," Sir Damon grumbled.

"We're not seeing the present war, are we?" Jenkins asked powerfully.

"Appleby and the *Scimitar* would never forgive me, Andrew,—if I allowed you to go alone."

"Now I like you, Damie," Andrew returned genially.

I could not help thinking of Dan Dravot and Peachey Carnehan—the men who would be kings. One hundred hours later, they were at sea in a creaking, tossing junk, which Jenkins promptly named *St. Vitus* for her spasms of leaping from crest to crest. In a slight degree, I felt like a manacled father who perceives his children thrust into a den of lions. Jenkins was dear to me in a way, and Walpole was absolutely useless. The latter's personal baggage was a hamper as large as a coffin-box, filled with sandwiches and champagne, payment for which had completely dishevelled one of Andrew's circular notes. I never knew any one who could become so completely absorbed in the wine of Rheims and Epernay as Sir Damon.

Late the fifth night following, the two staggered back into the Shantung Hotel. An ugly sea was roaring even in Chifu harbor, and these men had come in from the open water, and from a craft no bigger than a liner's life-boat. The old point of light still lived in the eyes of Jenkins, but Walpole's face was a tallowy void—all rational expression rubbed out. Moreover, he was jumpy and whimpering. Both men were haggard, unshaven, and dripping salt water. I sprang to grasp Jenkins's hand, whispering:

"Did you get into the fortress?"

"Well, rather," he answered.

"What brand of Hades was it that unseated Walpole's mind?" I asked in a low tone. The Englishman had disappeared into the buffet, and presently reached us the sound of a drawn cork. "Was the fortress bad enough for that?"

He smiled in a pained, whimsical fashion. "No, it was n't bad enough for that. The Russians looted his hamper. When they took off our bandages and boosted us back into the junk, I heard a low, hopeless cry of mortal pain. It was from Wallie, groping about in the bottom of the boat. The wine was gone. His mind wandered from that moment."

There was something tremendously promising in this fragmentary speech. Heartlessly, I nailed him to the table, applied stimulants, and dragged forth the skeleton of his adventures.

"Say, when the lights of Chifu blew out behind our junk five nights ago, I sort of lost faith about Japan and Russia stopping their war to let us pass to and fro. The *St. Vitus* would squat and leap, dive and jerk up—well, I had n't been out thirty minutes before I lost all the anchors from my diaphragm. Then the Chinese mumbled under the wind, and my baronite, wedged between his hamper and the bulk-head, burst forth every little while with the announcement

that they were 'hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.' Every time Danny's soul passed 'black agin' the sun,' Damie reached over in the dark and bumped me with a tin-cup full of champagne. Finally a change came over the face of his speech, his sentences getting shirred like the cloth of an apron at the waist-band. . . . Say, those Chinese of ours knew their business. They had run the blockade before. In full dark, the second night, just as we were diving into Pigeon Bay, a search-light from ahead caught and held us. Our souls were laid bare! I could see the blue of my finger-nails, the red in Wallie's blinkers, and the yellow of Chino faces. The titled one wanted to know if daylight didn't spring rather sudden in these seas. I suggested that it was the holy resurrection morn, but he was back asleep before the glare lifted. The Chinos rushed about in great excitement, dropping sails. Just then the *St. Vitus* struck with a grinding grunt and kicked up behind. It seemed to me that nothing short of a battleship or the mainland of Asia could pull us up so short. It was the mainland; the blockaders were far behind. The search-light was not Togo's, but the white eye of a Russian fort at the tip of Liaotung. Damie thought we had hit an iceberg, and gurgled the proposition that he chip off some for the hamper.

"Properly beached, I endeavored to scramble ashore, but a bayonet was stiffly pressed against my vest between the second and third button, and the impulse dribbled. I reasoned that they were not quite ready to receive me at the fortress. The dawn came down with a shiver. Twenty Russians with fixed bayonets were standing on the beach. The Chinese of the *St. Vitus* did n't seem to worry apparently, for they were gathered about a rice-kettle, gently pitching in stickfuls of provender. The hamper still contained the smouldering souls of many French grapes, and there was a sea-green bottle between the knees of Walpole, Bart. For a small port, Chifu had kept a pretty creditable stock on hand.

"About this time a handsome young officer in pale blue came down the beach—brown beard carefully trimmed and large, tender eyes. I marked this because I expected to find the soldiers of Port Arthur haggard and starving. . . . It appears that the Russian, who spoke some English, had n't heard of the *Scimitar*, but he asked what was the matter with my nobleman. I told him either sea-sickness or champagne poisoning. Just then Damie arose from the depths of the *St. Vitus* with a tin-cup full of swirling foam and leaping sparks, and a bleary murmur to me: 'I shall be affronted, deah boy, unless you present me to yah friend.' I passed the cup to the Russian, upon whose countenance appeared a singular illumination, as if he had received some token of joy from his sweetheart in Europe. Then appeared a Russian officer of sterner mould, who ordered us blind-

folded as a preliminary to being shot as spies. Damie, still bent on entertainment, assured them that there was plenty more still in the hamper. For an hour we were toted between two furry, smelly serfs, Sir Damon at intervals calling for a carriage. I expected something of the sort all too soon—the chariot of fire."

With great effort—for the healthy Jenkins was sleepy as a babe—I drew from him what followed. After an interminable walk, they were shoved into a cool, stone-paved place; an iron door clanged; they were searched to the bone before their eyes were uncovered. The Englishman, torn from his hamper, quietly awaited death. Jenkins declared that he had passed many weeks that did not seem so long as that day. There was a constant rumble of cannon. A sentry with a crusted and shaven jowl, standing just outside the bars, hourly changed his weight from one foot to the other. Andrew addressed him variously, but the soldier only looked excited and piddled with his rifle-butt. At last came darkness, and they were led to headquarters. No one seemed hard-pressed or unhappy there. Officers talked lightly, and one gray-bearded chief deliberated. All the while bursting shells shook the very vitals of the peninsula. When at last the Gray-beard spoke, the two were led forth again in blinders—to liberty or to death, they did not know, for the verdict had been uttered in Russian. Again the endless walk, until there came to the nostrils of Jenkins a breath from the sea, and presently the familiar voices of the *St. Vitus* Chinamen. Damie became suddenly reanimated, and no sooner were his bandages removed and his valuables returned than he dived into the bottom of the junk—from whence issued the low cry of pain.

Evidently that had been a busy night in the fortress. Sleepy as he was, Jenkins gave me a rather vivid idea of what he saw as the junk swung out into Pigeon Bay. Five Japanese search-lights slashed the heavens above the Russian fortifications, and the incessant deafening gun-play rocked the boat. The five great rays lowered to finger the Russian positions, but choked and blurred in the rolling banks of smoke. There was suddenly depicted, luminously white, the head and shoulder of a mountain, so clearly that Jenkins could see the trees hanging to the sides, like stick-pins in a cushion; and a set of Russian works, like teeth in a grinning skull. Something struck the summit as the American watched. It wept tears of stone and fire. For a second, after the debris cleared, the ray lingered gloatingly upon the gashed and altered peak—then went about its further business of the night. From miles at sea, as the *St. Vitus* wallowed stealthily up into the gulf again to elude Togo, Jenkins stared at the five twitching, ghastly fingers, as they whipped the thunder-racked hills and sprayed the sky with league-long streams of white. That was the *Scimitar's* vision of Port Arthur.

All of which was very good, but the story was n't mine. The telling was scarcely a personal courtesy since I had to blow it out of a very drowsy head and piece together the fragments.

"Come on, Andrew, I'll go to the cable with you," I said. "When you get your stuff off, I'll send a Combined Press message about you."

He smiled and stretched. "I haven't slept in four nights, and Tadpole seems overstrained. As soon as I get in forty-eight or sixty hours' sleep, and get my baronite back here among us in China, I guess I'll do a letter on the trip for the *Scimitar*."

"Do you mean to say," I gasped, "that you are not going to file a cable to-night? Do you mean to say that you don't realize that the whole civilized world is on tip-toe with straining ears, to hear how they are faring in Port Arthur, and that you are the only living white man who can give out the story? And you speak of a *letter* that will take six weeks to get into print—you the chosen of God—a letter, oh, you Jenkins!"

For some reason, Andrew began to chuckle full-length, kicking up one salt-encrusted boot after the other, and slapping his thighs. "I guess I will slip over to the cable-office to-night and ask the *Scimitar* how much is wanted on my trip."

I followed by request. To Jenkins the humor of the moment was towering, as he despatched the following to Kramer of the *Scimitar*:

Got into Port Arthur all right. How many columns do you want?

So much for the night. Sir Damon had not left the billiard-room, as we found upon returning to the hotel. The golden geysers of Chifu had been replenished, and the tides of truth and reason flowed again in the brain of the nobleman—even unto exuberance. In the early light of next morning I was aroused by a roaring laugh and a prodigious banging at my door. It was Jenkins with a red cablegram in his hand—the *Scimitar's* answer:

Will mortgage house. Cable three hundred words. Mail detailed letter.—KRAMER.

The long-geared figure in pajamas was beset by spasms of mirth. He dressed, breakfasted, and sought the writing-room. Many, many pages his bulky hand had travelled over before I disturbed him.

"I was just thinking," he observed, "that a bunch of facts, which no one else has, is just as sure collateral as so many dripping, smelly hides—but not so easy to handle. Say, I guess Kramer sweat blood a little last night—mortgaging his house for three hundred words! Also, I rise to announce that the Russians are a gentle, pastoral

people. Why, if I had taken the chances with Appleby ten years ago that I did with Port Arthur, I'd have been punctured various and on sight. Say, how many words do you think I have written? These are all nouns and verbs and big-gun stuff. I've left all the adjectives to old Ben Kramer, who can sure emblazon rhetoric enough."

I scanned the triple-decked manuscript. The cable-tolls on the big skeleton would amount to three thousand dollars easily. I told him so, expecting him to sink back abjectly.

"That ought to be pretty near enough," he said, continuing his writing.

My temperature rose rapidly, until at last I had to speak, but he was first: "The truth is, my friend, I'm a little too sleepy to quite do justice to the story. Of course the *Scimitar* will get it all eventually——"

"But the three hundred words, Andrew," I intervened. "If this Kramer has to mortgage his house for three hundred words, what will he put up for this young novelette you've turned out—his soul?"

"I ought to know pretty quick," he remarked, giving way to another one of his prolonged chuckling indulgences. It was an hour, however, before he received a cablegram confidently expected. It pleased him, and he turned to me:

"Now, just naturally, I could n't put the story into three hundred words. Maybe you could. Some of you fellows could put the story of heaven—front and side elevation and interior decorations of each mansion—in three hundred words; but it's not my game. Moreover, I could n't allow old Ben to mortgage his house. At the same time Appleby must be the first town in the United States to get the story of Port Arthur's insides. With this much to go on, and always remembering that my old dad was never a philanthropist, and that his son is to be the next Mayor of Appleby, I concluded that it was up to me to hand the Chinese linguist who fingers the cable—much good elegant hide profits."

"But I don't see——"

"Why, I've bought the *Scimitar*!" he exclaimed gleefully, hitting me a clap on the back that felt like a monkey-wrench. "Here's a copy of the proposition I sent Kramer this morning:

"Name your lowest selling price for Appleby *Daily Scimitar*;
also lowest salary for running same for me, keeping deal dark secret.
Scimitar must swing party in my interest for mayoralty.

"And here's the answer," he added. . . . Kramer had sent his price, which was satisfactory. True newspaper-man that he was, he had importuned his new owner and representative for the full and only truth concerning Port Arthur.

"It only remains for me to put my story on the wire," Andrew now declared. "I wish I knew of some way to make it—reverberate. You see, Appleby is rather far off."

"Fortunately, that is a matter I was about to attend to," I said, and hastily wrote on a cable-form to the *Combined Press*, New York, the following:

Watch Appleby *Daily Scimitar* for big bona fide Port Arthur story. This Jenkins was in fortress.

"I'll just put this on ahead of yours, Andrew. It will make the *Scimitar* reverberate," said I.

It was late the following day, thirty hours afterward, that this to me most enchanting affair was resumed in the form of two more cablegrams for the tanner's son. The first was from Kramer and is here:

Tremendous. Whole world copying our story. British nobleman for companion great hit.

"And to think," Jenkins reflected mirthfully, "it cost me nearly two dollars for Kramer to send that 'our.' And, say, I guess Damie has n't panned—what? The spirit of my father sure abode with me when I made him pay—eh? Here's another one of these bull-baiters." It read:

ANDREW JENKINS, CHIFU. Send thousand words condensed conditions Port Arthur. Will pay five hundred dollars.

This was from the New York *Globe-News*. A rare smile transfigured the bony face of Jenkins as he said to me: "You don't seem outrageously rushed. Ask me all the questions in the world and do this *Globe-News* stuff for me. I won't have old Kramer there to pound me into shape. You get half."

To this I assented as coolly as if I picked up two hundred and fifty every evening. . . . Walking on the beach the following morning, a Chinese servant from the hotel overtook Jenkins with two more red fliers from across the world. One was from a Chicago daily, containing substantially the same offer as that made by the *Globe-News*. The second was from the London *Thames*, and is worth quoting:

Cable complete story fortress adventure. One hundred pounds per thousand words. Kill Walpole. No such baronet in peerage.

"Say, I've got orders to kill off Damie," he called, half-running into my room at the hotel. "Is it a joke, an error in sending, or am I the logical assassin?"

This fitted rather neatly into my idea of the ludicrous, so that I lingered on an explanation to the effect that the *Thames* declared Sir Damon to be an impostor, and that "Kill Walpole" was newspaper for "Cut his part out of the story."

"Oh," he said, and then was quiet for a long time. I knew that he was adjusting himself to the altered front of his companion in the recent perils.

"Say, old pal," he said to me finally, "will you take care of these two offers on the same basis as that of the *Globe-News*?"

I accepted coldly, but not without the thought that I would shortly buy a *Scimitar* for myself if this kept up. It was at least an hour later when Andrew ventured:

"I suppose they are a bit religious over in England about the nobleman game, aren't they?"

I signified that such was my impression.

"I don't believe I'd like it over there," he mused.

Though I watched closely during the rest of the day, and the following as well, I could see no change in the attitude of Jenkins toward the benighted Damon. The American, however, was pre-occupied in manner, and held rather more than usual to his room. I was with him at dinner when a last cable was delivered to his hand. The line struck him first as unimportant; then he grew tensely thoughtful, finally breaking into a gladsome bellow of cheer. When the gale subsided, he stated the contents of the message.

"The *Thames* says your Port Arthur story was quite satisfactory. Wants a man for Chifu; fifteen pounds the week and expenses; gives me first chance for the post, with the request to cable at once. . . . Say, duties are rather light here, don't you think?"

"Altogether too light just now for a man of industry and ambition," I answered.

"That'll be all right. Let's saunter into the billiard-room——"

"But, Jenkins, I thought you were starting home, via Suez!"

"Shortly," said he.

In the billiard-room we encountered Walpole, Not. Andrew squared up before him and chucked the Englishman under the chin.

"Damie," he said, "they tell me you are not bred in the purple. How is it?"

The other turned gray and wilted.

"Tell me."

Sir Damon shook his head.

"What are you, Damie?"

"Just a younger son—gone wrong."

"Thanks, I merely wanted to know. Let's negotiate for a bottle of wine."

We sat down together. Finally Andrew said: "Damie, I'm starting back for the States pretty soon, the roundabout way. I've felt a long time a little sorry to leave you. Speaking frankly, you don't seem self-supporting. But it's all fixed. You're to be Andrew Jenkins, Chifu correspondent of the London *Thames*. I'll fix it up with the American consul here to-morrow for you to draw *Thames*' checks made out in my name. None but we three need know."

He explained the whole matter twice.

"But I'm not a newspaper-man," declared Walpole.

"Neither am I, but it's a pipe," said the American.

And so Jenkins of the *Scimitar* left me with a memory of him flawless and unimpaired. I helped Sir Damon through the first bulletins, and when I returned to Chifu late in the fall, on the way to the States—after the big battles of Liaoyang and Mukden—he was still grimly at his post. Apparently the *Thames* was satisfied. . . . In Appleby, two months later, I was royally entertained by the new Mayor. Will Jenkins be the next Governor of his native State? . . . To me there is but one answer—if he does n't change his mind.



NOW THE SPRING IS WAKING

BY E. NESBIT

NOW the Spring is waking:
 Very shy as yet;
 Busy mending, making,
 Grass and violet.
 Frowsy winter's over.
 See, the budding lane.
 Go and meet your lover:
 Spring is here again.

Every day is longer
 Than the day before;
 Lambs are whiter, stronger;
 Birds sing more and more.
 Woods are less than shady;
 Griefs are more than vain.
 Go and kiss your lady:
 Spring is here again.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By Joseph M. Rogers

Author of "Educating Our Boys," etc.

FOURTH PAPER—SOME REFORMS SUGGESTED

WHAT sacrifices are we prepared to make in order that our children shall be properly educated?

That is the practical question of the hour. Even those who think present conditions tolerably good must admit that they can be improved. We ought not to be content with anything less than the best attainable.

The sacrifices include more money in the shape of taxes, but also the devotion by parents of more time to the subject of education. The best system in the world is not going to accomplish much without the intelligent coöperation of parents. It is a pity that fathers and mothers as a rule are willing to devote so little time to the subject, when they should be aiding the teachers in every way, supplying deficiencies and affording stimulus. It cannot be denied that most parents send their boys to school with a sense of relief. If they can afford it, they sometimes send their boys to private school, feeling that in this way they are performing their whole duty.

If the boy is sent to boarding-school, it is rare that the expense is less than seven hundred and fifty dollars a year; generally it is more. If he is sent to a city school, and lives at home, the cost is likely to be two hundred dollars a year at least for tuition and incidentals alone. In the more prominent schools the cost is much greater. Now, it is certain that these private schools give boys greater advantages than are possible in the public schools, and this is natural, since the cost is from seven to ten times as great. We have before our eyes a demonstration of the fact that the best education is a good deal more expensive than that which the State affords. It is evident that the time is never coming when all boys can go to private

school, and it is the duty of the State to give all children as good opportunities as possible. Sixty years ago the city of Philadelphia spent about seven dollars per capita on its pupils. To-day the sum is about forty dollars, although it is difficult to make a comparison, since construction figured little in the earlier cost. We have improved our system vastly in the meantime, but not in all respects. The point at issue is whether boys and girls now have a better equipment than formerly. I think that they have more knowledge, but that it is not so well digested, nor so useful to them. The remedy will not consist in going back to the older ways, but in developing our own, with due regard to the modern factors which have been introduced into society.

What is a young man or woman worth to the country in dollars and cents?

This seems a little cold-blooded, but we know as a matter of fact that our national wealth, after all, consists in our people, without whom property would be of no value. Italy has looked with dismay upon the exodus of the manhood and womanhood from that country in the last two decades. It may be admitted that not all of the people we get from Italy are of the highest type, but the Italian government figures that every one who leaves entails a national loss of at least two thousand dollars. We certainly ought to put a higher estimate on our people than that. We know that as a rule the more intelligent people are, the more valuable they are to society. It is not alone the ditch-digger or the manual laborer of any sort that is a creator of wealth. That is a fatal defect of socialistic philosophy. Intelligently directed industry of any sort creates wealth, and as a rule the greater the intelligence, the greater the wealth created.



Our young people who are growing up will take places in society largely according as their parents give them opportunity. Of course individuality will count for a great deal, and there are exceptional instances where boys and girls overleap all obstacles, but as a rule we lay out for our children the paths which they are pretty certain to tread, and we expect them to do better than we. The best future for their children is the controlling thought of all good parents. We ought to be willing to give up some things which we consider essential for our own comfort if we can be assured that it will benefit our children.

Aside from pensions, the nation is spending about \$250,000,000 a year for military purposes. In so doing, it recognizes that, whatever may be the platitudes of philosophers, force governs the world. In

the last ten years our total military expenses have been about \$2,000,000,000 (or almost equal to the national bonded indebtedness at the close of the Civil War), although we were at peace with all the nations, save for a few skirmishes in the Philippines. In a sense this seems a terrible waste. Every one of the warships constructed in that period may possibly go to the scrap-heap before it is used in battle, but we feel that so long as what we call civilization rules by force, we must be prepared for eventualities.

This condition reacts on all society. As a nation, we are preparing for war at any time. We are not really expecting it, but we are acting as if we did. Force of one kind or another rules all society, and we must train up our boys to meet conditions as they find them. They may better them somewhat, but it is not likely that the millennium is to arrive this century. It therefore behooves us to make our boys actual and potential warriors for every kind of battlefield, since life is at its best a struggle, a constant warring between opposing forces. There is a sort of Battle of Armageddon going on in every human being, and the mollicoddles inevitably get the worst of it.



To make the well rounded man and woman, we must give an objective and subjective experience of life to the boy and girl. We are making it almost wholly academic. The great objection that children have to most studies is that they seem to deal with unrealities, are so intangible as to be nothing more than pictures. To supply the needed instruction calls for a much larger and more varied equipment than is now employed, and it is going to cost a lot of money.

How easily we raise money for anything which we really consider essential! It is not forgotten how blithely we entered upon the war with Spain, which did not prove expensive as wars go, but brought in its train an increase of general expenditure, so that our national expenses are now double what they were twenty years ago. A billion dollars could be raised for war purposes without the slightest difficulty. We are not alone in this respect. Ten years ago Great Britain thought it was heavily encumbered with debt, but it expended \$1,250,000,000 in the Boer war, and has been increasing its expenses ever since.

France has a public debt of nearly \$7,000,000,000. It may be granted that the French are not growing in population, nor is the nation expanding in any way outside its own borders, yet it seems to carry this burden without difficulty, while every nation in the world that wants money goes to Paris, where there is ever a demand for investment by the thrifty people. There is not a nation in Europe

that is not heavily in debt, yet not one that is in anything like a critical financial condition. The point I wish to make is that the tax paying power of a nation is always greater than is estimated, and that in the long run paying taxes is a good investment if applied to proper purposes. Nothing is more productive financially than intelligent men and women. In 1879 our total national expenses were \$275,000,000. This year they will be almost four times as great, and I think there are few who feel the burden in any way. There are few people who are aware that they pay any federal tax whatever. Some think the education of their children costs nothing because they live in rented houses and send the children to public school. The real truth is that the poor man is paying more than his proportionate share of the cost of public education. The increased cost will not fall heavily upon the man with nothing struggling to better the status of his children, but upon those who have most benefitted financially by the State-educated young men and women.



I have not the slightest doubt that before many years we shall have to adopt the British plan of old age pensions, unless in the mean time the people of this country take very radical steps in the way of saving. Our proletariat is largely composed of foreigners, and it will be long before we can get rid of this undesirable class. Some of the best blood in the country is of foreign birth or extraction, but inevitably the worst of our population is the scum of Europe. These entail an enormous cost upon us, but it is encouraging to note that the second generation is almost invariably self-supporting. It will be a good deal cheaper in the end if instead of pandering to a paternalism which leaves everything to the State, we take the other tack and so far as is possible educate the rising generation so that it will be independent. Bad as poverty and indigence are, it cannot be doubted that a knowledge that the country is going to take care of derelicts in old age is a deterrent to thrift. The Germans have a better system than the British in that they make the individual do much of the saving, but with us we are coming to look upon pauperism as inevitable. It is not inevitable, and it is a pity so many well meaning persons are really making more paupers all the time instead of giving a right stimulus to make it so hateful that it will be avoided at all costs.

We can educate our youth so that pauperism will be almost an unknown thing in a few generations. We cannot change the natures of our children by education. As I have already said, education in books originates nothing. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were probably illiterate, but they were truly educated. Learning is not power, though

knowledge is. We want our children to acquire good character and to achieve honorable things in this world. We want them to have a perspective of life. We want them to learn as children along the lines which they will follow in after life. It is a common mistake that there is any bridge to cross between primary and secondary education, or between secondary and higher. It is all the same process from beginning to end—that of training the mind in the proper direction so that it will lay hold of the many complex problems of life and achieve an honorable success. Some people have succeeded by being kicked out of home early and fighting battles alone. Most such boys and girls fail absolutely. At present our process is to send them to school, where for a few years they absorb more or less definitely a certain amount of varied and unrelated information on a vast variety of topics, the theory being that this will make them good husbands and wives, good fathers and mothers, good business men and women, good professional practitioners in various directions. That it is partly a failure needs no demonstration. The goods are not delivered.

And the reason is that our system of education seems so utterly foreign to anything in life that it becomes distasteful. Why should it be foreign? Why should n't the boy who is studying mathematics be getting some practical demonstration of its necessity and of the real efficiency of figures? Why is he not brought up to think of the realities of life instead of making pictures to himself all the time? That is the whole trouble with our system. It seems to be fooling away a lot of time in a disagreeable manner, while boys and girls want to get at things which interest them. They can be made just as interested in their work as in their play. We must see to it that they are provided with an education that interests while it instructs, and makes leaving the school-room for active life seem no great matter after all.



We must also have a better system of administration all the way through, from the top to the bottom. At present, we may be said to have no top. The National Educational Bureau is nothing but a statistics collecting and distributing institution. It is true that it is possible for the incumbent of the chief office to aid in some directions, and to give a good deal of stimulus in a personal way; but so far as having any vital relation to popular education, the bureau might as well as not be abolished.

I have already expressed my belief that the nation should pay part of the expense of popular education. Whether it does so or not, there

should be a national system established, with a Federal officer having responsibility and authority at the head. Most enlightened nations have such a system and such an officer. Why have for agriculturists and laborers and commercial men officials in the cabinet, while education is neglected? Just now it is because there is nothing for such an officer to do, but we should get to work and provide him with plenty of work and responsibility. A Federal bureau or department presided over by the ablest educator of the country, with a large staff of competent assistants, would be able to give much inspiration and effective help to the whole cause. It would enable the best results to be secured and distributed for the benefit of all. It ought to do more for education than a department now does for agriculture or commerce. Although at present the Federal Bureau of Education is simply a statistics-gathering and slightly informing affair, it accomplishes enough good to show how effective it might become if properly organized and supported.

But since it has been our policy to leave education wholly to the States, we might suppose that in them we should find the very best and most effective organization. Unfortunately, for the most part, we find nothing of the kind. Influence and power in education is least where it should be greatest—at the top. There are a few enlightened States where the State officers of education have really important powers and exercise them, but for the most part the work is more or less moribund. The office is generally a political one, changes are frequent, and all that is accomplished is of a clerical sort, aside from the superintendence of teachers' institutes and the making of a few public addresses. Almost without exception, the superintendent of education is a poorly paid official, and in all cases the compensation is too low. In some States it is as low as \$1200, or less than what some legislative clerks get. Pennsylvania now pays \$4000, but for years the salary was \$2500, while political jobs paid many times the sum.



I have been unable to find in more than a few States a condition of affairs anything like moderately ideal. This is largely due to the fact that the smaller political units which raise the taxes insist on having a preponderant influence in everything affecting the schools. It is only recently that there has been a decided improvement in this respect. Pennsylvania has taken a long step forward by preparing an excellent code. It failed of passage, but some reforms are sure to follow.

What seems most essential just now is that we be able to get the best teachers for the public schools, since on them depends more than on any other factor in the situation. When teaching becomes an

honored and well paid profession its claims of localities will cease. Teachers will be selected according to merit, without regard to residence. In Germany mayors are hired just as here railway presidents are secured. The cities go where they can get the best talent. The mayor of Berlin, whose salary, all things considered, is greater than that of the President of the United States, was hired from a small city in the southern part of the Empire. To an extent, that system prevails now in the higher grades of teachers in the public schools, but it is still a lamentable fact that the great majority of primary and grammar school teachers in the country depend upon some influence or political pull to secure and maintain a position. This evil is growing somewhat less, but it ought to be abolished. It is a reform that need not wait a moment.



But, leaving out the State and nation, the local administration of public schools is probably where the most immediate and effective reform is possible if there be the willing mind. A few of our school directors are men of high standing, men who give of their time and talents freely in the cause of education. More often they are the most ordinary sort of politicians. It is one of the greatest of American crimes that for a century the entrance to political preferment has usually been through the school board, whether it be in a city or in the rural districts. An ambitious man gets a foothold in this way, and makes it a stepping-stone to "higher" things, where there is more money. It is not surprising that under such circumstances there has been so little improvement. The wonder is that we have managed to make any progress at all. Unpaid service is apt to be unsatisfactory at all times, and it seems as if we should have to change our policy in regard to school direction. Men are as much deserving of pay for caring for schools as for looking after docks and wharves, after streets and sewers, after police and firemen. The trouble with unpaid service is that you cannot criticise or discipline it so sharply as where you are paying for it. There ought to be a few paid laymen in connection with every school board, in cities at least. At present there is a lot of complaining, and not enough done. There ought to be some way to secure quick results or know the reason why. It is so in every other branch of service, but the low estimate of education is in no way better demonstrated than from the fact that it is so poorly paid in every department.

After all is said and done, and supposing nothing is done at all in the matter, there is one way in which reforms can be instituted without money and without legislation. There ought to be a better

and closer intimacy between parents and teachers than now exists. I have repeatedly pointed out how parents are shifting their own duties and responsibilities upon the shoulders of the teachers. How much pains do parents take to see how this work is being performed? How many parents are acquainted with the teachers of their children? I venture to say that in the cities the number is not ten per cent. How many parents take the trouble to invite the teachers to their homes for a dinner and a long confidential chat afterwards on the most important topic to both? How many teachers are willing or anxious to accept such invitations? The average parent never goes to a school, unless to lodge a complaint. The information gained about the administration of the schools is derived almost exclusively from the children. It is often false and usually biased.

In some cities the experiment is being tried of having Mothers' Meetings at the school-houses periodically, to discuss problems mutually interesting to parents and teachers. Occasionally these become permanent institutions, and much good results. Recently Philadelphia has done much in this direction. The difficulty arises from getting parents to attend regularly once a month at a given hour. They cannot see that it is an important engagement. They may go a few times, and then lose interest, or there may be a bridge game, or there is a seamstress in the house. Any excuse will serve.



Teachers are almost invariably the object of bitter criticism, much or most of which is wholly unjust, and almost all of which could be avoided if parents would take the time for personal investigation. Most men are unable to get away from business during school hours, and mothers won't take the trouble. Was there ever a boy or girl, not under discipline, whose eye did not light up with pleasure at the sight of a parent entering the school-room? Was there ever a teacher who did not welcome a visitor who came not to blame, but to learn what was going on? It is ignorance of conditions which is responsible for much of the fault-finding. The real faults are seldom mentioned.

The truth is, we parents are selfish. We are neglecting our children and trying to salve our own consciences by blaming others. No matter how much money is spent, no matter how good the system of administration adopted, we are not going to get very far unless parents take hold and do more of their proper share of education. In reality the teacher is only the parent's helper. It is not wholly an ideal condition to have children in school at all. The home is where they should get their best education, and where they ought even now to get the most of it. The school of to-day is a rather crude invention

for accomplishing the greatest good to the greatest number, and it is of value only as we supplement its work at home. That is where the trouble arises.

But while we are selfish, we are an affectionate people. We spoil our children. We let them do pretty much as they please, in reasonable limits, so long as they do not bother us. The intelligent parent who spends ten minutes a day with each child in loving discussion of matters which interest the latter is not likely to have much trouble. Some parents do this, but it is safe to say that the majority do not. Is n't the teacher hired for that sort of thing? In any event, you are too busy, you must hurry off to the theatre or to some social engagement. But it is not wholly from a lack of time or inclination. In these days parents seem to have a feeling that they are not very good advisers for their own children, and have a sneaking hope that the schools will make up their own deficiencies. Until such conditions are changed there is going to be no improvement.



It ought to have been made clear to readers by this time that there is a very unsatisfactory condition of affairs, and that there are some remedies. In the last ten years people have been more or less in the state of hysteria which always follows a foreign war. The conflict with Spain was brief, but it had an electrical effect upon the nation, and led to an extraordinary expansion in territory, in business, in national expenditure, and to a change in our ideals. I do not hold that we have deteriorated, but I do think that for a time we were intoxicated with the sudden burst of enthusiasm which spread over the nation, with the vast expenditures of energies in new directions by the sudden inflation of fortunes. We have been having a very strenuous time in many directions, but the reaction has set in, and we shall be all the better for our incursion into new fields if we take the proper steps. We have been looking outward rather than inward. Our outlook in life has been objective rather than subjective. With all our getting, we have been getting less wisdom than we might have secured. We are now at liberty to chew the cud of reflection and make a new start.

All of us are anxious that education should be put on the proper basis. Of this general proposition there is no doubt. The difficulty in the past has been that so many persons imagined that our school system was the greatest in the world and the best attainable. Now that our eyes are being opened, there is a growing number of intelligent and influential persons who are working in the right direction.

We want our children to be of use in the world. We want them

to achieve something worth while. We want them to develop good character. These things come not without great effort in many directions. The schools cannot do everything, but they can accomplish much more than at present. They can be made to aid in the development of the quality of leadership, and this is really what is needed just now.

Probably few persons stop to notice the changes which are going on in this country all the time. In the last generation there have come extraordinary developments, not the least of which is the injection of alien blood. In the last ten years about seven millions of foreigners reached these shores, or double the whole number of Americans at the end of the Revolution. There seems to be no reason to suppose that the tide will cease. It stopped for a year, but is surging again. It is inevitable that in a few generations there is to be a new type in the United States, in which foreign blood will have an important part. The foreign element is by no means undesirable. Physically speaking, it is above the average. In intelligence and education it is lacking, but it is going to mix with American and form a new type. These changes are coming so fast that it is of the utmost importance that the present generation of boys and girls be trained for the problems of their early manhood and womanhood.

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We all of us look to see American institutions and ideals perpetuated. If so, we must see that our children are prepared for the work. Our fathers accomplished things more easily than our children will be able to, because there were more opportunities and less opposition and resistance. The struggle for existence is growing more desperate all the time. The battle for the prizes of life calls for the utmost energies. We want our children to have all the equipment possible. It is not all to be gotten from books. We have hitherto worshipped too much at the shrine of mere learning. Book-lore has its prime importance in the world, but there were great achievements when only a few men knew how to read, and even in these days it is not the men with the most academic training who are in all respects the most successful, and I do not mean solely in financial affairs. There is a larger school of life than is to be found in four walls. There are lessons to be learned always and everywhere. We want our children to learn all of these, so as to have their share of the good things which life provides for those of good character.

In the succeeding paper we shall consider the question of the cost of needed improvements in our public schools.

THE MOB

By Eleanor Mercein Kelly

NATURE had stolen a march on Rufe and turned him into a man before he was in the least expecting it. Long legs, huge shoulders, great, brawny arms—everything had suddenly become grown-up except the heart of him. Not that this affected Rufe's real life to any extent. Squirrels were still his play-mates, birds came to his call, rabbits "froze" at a certain signal and waited obligingly for him to join them. But the viewpoint of the humans toward him underwent a change. It had been his simple custom to waylay white ladies near their kitchen doors at intervals, and announce, pulling his forelock, "I 's hongry, please 'm." Now, instead of providing prompt sympathy and sustenance, they had taken to asking, "What work can you do?"

This was disconcerting. Rufe dearly loved to be at peace with the world, and quibbles about mere food and the earning of it made for discord. Not that he was unwilling to work—far from it. He accepted with enthusiasm any job that presented itself, from mowing lawns to house-painting. But just as his arms were getting the fine swing of the scythe, for instance, some secretive feathered acquaintance would hurry by with a straw in her beak; and naturally Rufe dropped the scythe to follow. Or at the top of the ladder where he was working deftly with his brushes, the panorama of the sky would suddenly assail him, a blue ocean where ships moved in majesty along a shifting shore-line of cloud; and naturally Rufe sat right down on the top rung to study that far country, and to dream about it.

Once at such a moment Rufe found opportunely in his pocket a bit of chalk and a blue crayon pencil, and he spent a very happy morning sprawled upon the porch-roof. He was being paid by the day to paint window-frames belonging to Miss Hallie—a lady who had provided manna regularly in his childhood, and was pronounced by many a hungry pickaninny "de givin'est lady in town."

"Well, Rufe," she said severely, coming upon him suddenly, "are you painting my window-frames to-day, or are you not?"

"No 'm, Miss Hallie, I ain't," he admitted. "I 's jes' paintin' de sky instid. Look. Ain't it a purty picsher?"

She inspected the soiled bit of paper with some interest. Perhaps

the race was about to develop its long-promised genius. But no. Across a blue crayon background ran a few meaningless wiggles of chalk, that was all.

"Dem's ships, an' bays, an' mountings," he explained. "Cain't you see 'em, Miss Hallie? Why, I kin! Dey's right purty."

"Rufe," said the lady, "God has made his sky too 'purty' for most of us to copy. The best we ordinary mortals can do is to keep our minds on useful things and earn our dinners."

"Yas 'm," submitted Rufe. He had great respect for Miss Hallie's opinions as well as her dinners. Therefore, he appeared to her several hours later with another drawing. The object it represented had four legs—of that Miss Hallie was certain.

"What sort of animal is it?" she asked.

"'Tain't no animal," explained Rufe patiently. "Hit's a cheer. A po'ch-cheer—yas 'm. You say keep ou' min's on somefin useful, an' I done kep' mine on dat cheer ever sence. Cheers is harder 'n skies to copy, 'cause dey ain't so purty. You kin keep de picshers," he added generously.

But Miss Hallie had lost patience, and Rufe went that night without his dinner.

Under the new order of things, going without dinner became quite a habit with him. Who could be expected to waste the precious moments earning food, with August calling from wood and meadow, with the sun shining down so drowsily, with whirring lawn-mowers and droning bees making lullaby through all the world? Besides, Rufe was very busy in his waking hours perfecting the complicated double whistle he had invented, to the envy and despair of every boy in town. The raggedness of his scant apparel grew alarming. Once a philanthropic gentleman offered him the loan of a rifle, suggesting that he earn a living shooting birds and rabbits for the market. He never forgot the look Rufe turned on him.

"Shoot 'em?" he said slowly. "Why—why, dey likes me, suh!"

It was not long before even Miss Hallie was forced to admit that her protégé was developing into a "worthless nigger," although she admitted it reluctantly. To her, he seemed only a child grown big; and Miss Hallie's heart, having never contracted about children of her own, had room in its capacious depths for even the small black folk around her. But the town had seen enough of worthless niggers. Several of the tragedies which are the nightmare of Southern communities had blotted the record of the little suburb; and the old easy-going friendliness between the races had recently developed a tiny spark of hostility. On the rare occasions when Rufe, impelled by real necessity, signified his willingness to work, he was often met by a curt "Get out!"

Deprived of his natural protectors, the white ladies, he soon accepted suggestions from his companions of the woods and fields. Birds were not deterred from their foraging by any troublesome sense of *meum et tuum*—why Rufe? Rabbits managed to make a comfortable living off the property of others—was Rufe their inferior in ability? Not he. Cows began to trouble their owners by a decrease in the yield of milk. Sometimes a back-porch ice-chest was found depleted, or a tomato-vine stripped of its fruit, or a chicken-coop minus one broiler. The neighborhood, which prided itself on its unlocked doors, was indignant. Nobody could be certain, but Rufe waxed daily in fat and brawn, and people looked after him suspiciously as he shuffled about, keeping elaborate time to a song he had made for himself:

“Oh my, wisht I could fly!
Ef I was a buhd,
I'd never peck roun' in dishyer town—
Ef I was a buhd,
I'd set on de trees,
An' tek my ease,
An' fan myse'f wid a liddle breeze.
Oh my, but de clouds sail high—
Wisht I was a buhd!”

Quite unconscious of the town's growing disfavor, Rufe felt so well-fed and prosperous in those days that he shortly adopted that recognized badge of prosperity, the buttonhole-bouquet. Sometimes it was a large yellow lily, loyally chosen instead of the white sort because he believed it to be a mulatto flower. But more often it was a tiny, folded pink rosebud—“purty as a baby chile,” he once explained to an involuntary provider of rosebuds, touching it lovingly with his huge fingers. If Rufe was neither poet, painter, nor musician, it was not for lack of that passion for all things “purty” which we call temperament.

One hot day he lay buried deep in fern, on the lookout for fairies. Miss Hallie had been reading about them to some children as he passed, and he stood near for a long time, listening. “Funny I ain't never saw none o' dem folks in my wood!” he muttered, hurrying thither. He called a certain little strip of trees his wood because it did not seem to belong to any one else; and, any way, it was such a small affair that he was sure nobody could begrudge it to him.

He tried the call for squirrels, and mocking-birds, and flickers, and katydids, until all the small people of the wood were in a flutter. But not a fairy responded. Then he lay very still awhile, hoping one might just happen along. A little wind blew through the fragrant fern, sounding, he thought, like fairies whispering. Beside him was a

round hollow, doubtless a fairy-ring, though he had never before realized it.

Presently—sure enough! The ferns parted, and into the hollow crept a small pink person on all fours, who got to her feet with one mighty effort and gazed about triumphantly. Rufe stared at her and giggled. She stared at Rufe and giggled.

"Did n't know you-all looked so much like babies, ma'am," he said politely.

"I lunnin away," replied the fairy.

There was a pause. Rufe felt that it was expected of him, as host, to furnish entertainment. He tried the double-whistle.

The fairy scrambled upon him with round, pleased eyes. "Fissle some more!" she commanded.

Rufe complied.

"More!" ordered the fairy, bouncing up and down on him. "More!" She attempted the double-whistle herself, making desperate mouths over it, but the effort proved abortive.

There was another pause.

"You-all like to see my Christmas-gif?" said Rufe, pulling out a precious jack-knife which Miss Hallie had given him—his entire personal property, by the way, unless you count two garments.

"Whee!" cried the fairy. "Cut! Cut! Me want boaty."

The ice was broken. If there was one thing more than another at which the great fingers were adept, it was the fashioning of boats. The two settled right down to business. As he whittled, Rufe imparted many social items of the wood: where the red squirrel hid his store, for example; how the younger cardinal had three eggs this year instead of two, the bad luck of the mocking-birds with their second family because of thunder-storms, etc. The fairy hung on his every word. Once people came calling up and down the road: "Sally! O-oh, Sally!" But Rufe and the fairy, deep in fern, were not discovered.

When the boat was nearly finished—boat-building takes time—the fairy suddenly collapsed across his knees, murmuring, "I seepy." Rufe sat very, very still, watching her, until there were pins and needles in his legs. Once he touched the pink rosebud in his buttonhole, whispering, "Hit's done come alive!" At last, realizing that the sun had quite gone out of the world, he got cautiously to his feet. "O' co'se it *mought* be one o' dem fairies," he sighed, "but ef it ain't, I reckon somebody's honin' to put dishyer chile to bed."

He was shuffling along the road with his burden, when a little girl rushed out at him and clasped him frantically about the knees. "That's *our* baby! Help! Help!" she screamed. "Let her go! You shan't steal her, you big black devil!"

Rufe stared at her, startled, uncomprehending. The fury of terror in her little white face went to his heart—that warm African heart which makes “mammy” so dear a word to Southern people.

“Honey—why, honey!” he said. “Don’t you look so skeert o’ Rufe;” and in his anxiety to soothe the child, he bent down and tenderly patted her cheek.

She shrieked aloud. The girl was older than she looked, and had been brought up, as some unfortunate children are, in terror of the kindly black folk about her. In a moment the road was thronged. With that one shriek, the smouldering spark of race-hatred had burst into flame.

A man seized the child from Rufe’s arms, dealing him a staggering blow. Some half-grown boys began to throw stones at him, yelling, “Police! Police!” Near by, a woman screamed for a pistol. Rufe began to run. “Hide yo’self, man, hide yo’self!” cried a negress as he passed. “De mob ’ll git yer!”

Rufe ran toward Miss Hallie’s house, dazed. The mob! Will there ever be a negro who does not cower in his soul when the meaning of that word strikes home to him? Eager, silent men who hunt you down as dogs run a rabbit, men who will not listen, who kick and curse you and spit on you, and drag you by the rope around your neck to the nearest tree or a pile of brushwood—God! But his Miss Hallie would take care of him. She would explain. He must get to Miss Hallie.

She met him at the gate, her eyes straining anxiously through the dusk, for rumor had run faster than Rufe. “It is n’t you, boy—oh, it can’t be! Why, I’ve known you since you were a fat black baby, clinging to my skirts. You’ve been no-account, I know, but to steal a child and insult a white girl—Rufe, tell me it is n’t *you* they’re after!”

“Yas ’m, ’t is,” he panted. “Don’t tek on so, Miss Hallie. Jes’ hide me som’ers, quick, please ’m.”

She recoiled in horror. “Hide you? Never? Don’t come near me, you beast! But run—they must not take you—run—run!”

Rufe stumbled blindly into his wood. The twilight was full of menace, voices shouting, the tread of hurrying feet in the road, torches flashing everywhere. He ran looking over his shoulder, not knowing that Miss Hallie had misled his pursuers for the sake of the fat black baby who had clung to her skirts. Where could he go? They were his only friends, those white men hunting him. He had slept in their hay-lofts ever since he could remember, eaten their food, played with their children. Their children! Even then his heart was aching for the terrified little girl he had tried to comfort.

A hidden root tripped him, and he fell heavily, full-length, into

the fairy hollow. With a grunt he rose to hurry on, but something had happened to his ankle. He could not step on it. In a moment the whole leg was a flame of pain.

"Better wait a liddle while," he muttered patiently.

He lay among the crushed, fragrant fern, every nerve tense, trying now and then to rise, and falling back again. Soon the stars twinkled out, and later the moon smiled serenely down at him. He smiled back at her, a smile twisted with pain. "Reckon you knows how purty you is, gal," he murmured whimsically. He wished that he dared whistle to ease the agony of his leg. He told himself stories, and whispered songs under his breath. But, through it all, he heard those feet tramping, tramping, up and down the roads. Every step meant discovery. The night was long.

With dawn came a new terror, brought by the baying of a dog. Bloodhounds! Rufe, gritting his teeth, forced himself to his feet. But the pain was unbearable, and he dropped again, panting. There was a rustling in the fern. Sweat stood out on his brow, and he opened his precious jack-knife. They must not take him, she had said——

But the rustling stopped, and presently Rufe laughed, a little wildly.

"Oh my, but de clouds sail high—
Wisht I was a buhd!"

He began to beat the refrain on a fallen beech-log beside him, and an inquisitive squirrel friend came to investigate, running fearlessly to his hand. Rufe suddenly realized that he was hungry and thirsty, horribly thirsty. It was a fat squirrel. He could quench his thirst with the blood, perhaps, and make a fire of twigs to roast the body. The body—ugh! Rufe shuddered as if it were human.

"Git out!" he hissed, and the squirrel scampered away with injured feelings.

Suddenly Rufe knew that he was being watched from behind. He clutched the jack-knife, and turned slowly, cautiously, till two eyes gleamed into his. They were hound's eyes. Rufe breathed hard, and braced himself. Out of the bushes came wriggling a thin yellow puppy which had long been haunting the neighborhood garbage-cans.

"Howdy, mulatter-dawg!" whispered Rufe, and unexpectedly dropped his face into his hands with a sob. The puppy licked his fingers.

The hours passed rather quickly after that, in spite of increasing hunger and thirst, for Rufe was busy teaching the mulatter-dawg to beg and play dead. Presently it deserted, however, to reappear later with bulging sides and a sleek look of repletion. Rufe sniffed at its

chops like another dog, to learn what it had eaten. The squirrel might have fared badly then, had it ventured within reach.

"When dark comes, I's boun' ter crawl out'n heah someways an' git me some water," Rufe told himself. But when dark came, he had forgotten.

Another long night, and the moon loomed sullen and red, and the stars danced dizzily. Rufe mumbled aloud to himself with a thick tongue, and the puppy licked his face, unrebuked. Sometimes it ran forward a little way, and looked back, whining. Rufe understood; but the effort to move was too terrible. Besides, there was the mob. He had forgotten many things, but not the mob.

When the sun was high and hot again, the bushes parted and a little girl appeared—the child who had shrieked—munching a piece of gingerbread. Instantly the puppy sprang on guard, bristling; but Rufe held out beseeching hands.

"Gimme," he pleaded hoarsely. "Gimme!"

Her mouth was open to scream; but somehow those desperate eyes touched the Eternal Feminine in her, and she came toward him fearfully, holding out the gingerbread.

That was the moment the mulatter-dawg chose to exhibit his new ownership of a master. He leaped at the child with a ferocious snarl, and pursued her valiantly out into the road. But in her fright she dropped the gingerbread.

"I gotter git it. I p'intedly *got* ter git it," muttered Rufe, and set himself, straining every nerve, to cover the few feet of ground that lay between him and food. But the puppy, returning in triumph, reached the toothsome morsel just in time, and swallowed it.

"Good, little feller, wa' n't it?" sighed the man, without rancor.

It took his benumbed brain some moments longer to realize just what had happened. The child had found him, she knew him, and that meant—God! That meant the mob. At last!

He made a final effort to get to his feet, knowing all the time that it would fail. A bitter sense of loneliness came over him. In all the great, crowded world, was there nobody to help, or to care? "Mulatter-dawg," he moaned, "oh, mulatter-dawg!" But the puppy, snoring in well-fed contentment, shook off the disturbing hand with a growl, and slept again.

There were sounds in the road already, hurrying feet, and the steady tramp of marching men. As he listened, his gentle eyes reddened, and the elemental savage peered out of them. He crouched against the beech-log, the knife ready, waiting—

They paused at the edge of the fairy hollow. Rufe laughed. "Don't be skeert. Come on, you ole mob, come on!" he whispered, and thought he was shouting. One started toward him. Summon-

ing all his force, he hurled the knife as if it were an assegai. It caught, harmless, in the skirts of Miss Hallie.

"Rufe—why, Rufe!" Her voice broke as she cried. "We are n't a mob, boy! We've come to carry you home. There never was any mob—it's all right! The baby explained, showed them the toy you made her. Listen! Listen!" She caught at him, for he was drooping, crumpling in on himself. "They want you to work for them, Rufe, to do chores, and help with the children—do you hear? With the *children*. Oh!" she wailed, wringing her hands. "He does n't hear me! I can't make him understand!"

But she was mistaken; for even as he collapsed inert across the beech-log, his swollen lips twisted into the semblance of a smile.



APRIL

BY JOHN NORTHERN HILLIARD

AFTER all is said and done—
 Shine or not the gracious sun,
 Blow or not the pungent breeze,
 Touched with Southern spiceries;
 Bend a sky of gray or blue,
 Bring the morning frost or dew,
 Be the grasses lush or dried,
 Meadows bare or daisy-pied,
 Be the furrows sludged with sleet,
 Bare the earth or green with wheat—
 Still is April fairer far
 Than the days of Summer are.

When the first tantaras ring,
 April, hoyden of the Spring,
 Trips a dance and holds to us
 Cups to tempt a Tantalus:
 Then the blood begins to stir;
 Old and young we follow her.
 Witch she is thus to ensnare;
 None her magic can forswear;
 And her weeping is a wile,
 Full of danger as her smile;
 Worthless then the wit of schools,—
 April calls—we're April's fools.

THE RISE OF GENEVIEVE

By Stanley Olmsted

Author of "The Nonchalante," "The Emotionalist," etc.

TOUCHING the rise of Genevieve, Isolda Spenser relieved herself of some indiscreet opinions.

"She came in," said Isolda, "from Punktown, Missouri, with a pink cotton grab-bag and a ruby hat lined with roses. Talk about your chronic hay! They tried her voice in Trot Baxter's office. She threw in a high C, on the top bough of a coon lullaby, and when Trot asked her where she'd learned how, she told him she was leadin' soprano of the best Punktown church choir, and had come to New York because her little sister needed the money."

"What had little sister been up to?" queried Alysia Smyth, eager for the scandal. Alysia was just now out of work: a visitor, behind scenes in the large dressing-room shared by Isolda with two others.

"Oh, little sister was a high-brow," explained the narrator, and casually jabbed more scarlet into her nostrils. "Wanted to make her degree in the Missouri State University, or somewhere."

Everybody was listening. In the far corner of the room Minna Webb, attenuate and angular, stroked her blue-satin directoire, and sniffed. "If I had n't turned out artistic," she said, "my great-uncle as lives in Boston, with more money than you could ice off in a refrigerator, was willing and ready to send me through Vassar. But I chose to finish in music. I studied with Larét—five plunks every lesson—and he——"

Minna's story was familiar. Moreover, she was incurably of the professional rear-ranks. Isolda bore down upon her ruthlessly, with the tale of their Prima Donna:

"Well, sir, when she got a part, they chalked out the places she was to stand on and the steps she was to take. She could hold up her head and sing, and that was about all. Trouble was, she held it up too much—does yet. Trot says he used to keep her bobbin' it by the hour to limber it up. He says he drilled dance-steps into her until he used to shed his collar and double his laundry bill. But she don't know no gratitude, says Trot."

"All the same, he saw his good money in her," ventured Bertha

Browne, a shrewd feminine wisp at the middle mirror. "Trot ain't wastin' energies when he don't hear the rumble of cash somewhere."

Whereupon, as one who has spoken and done, Bertha resumed a reflective procedure, involving deft manipulation of orange-sticks.

"Anyhow," pursued Isolda, "she had a grand success. Her very faults seemed to help: they took somehow, and she owes it all to Trot. And now that she's on the Incandescent Signboard, she can't see him 'way off!"

"Did the sister get through the University?" Alysia wanted to know.

"Sure! Sailed through in style, with all the trimmin's. And married a young man and settled in Lædville, Indiana, which, bein' my home town, is how I happen to know all the inside plot, bearin' out all poor Trot claims about his share and——"

A rap at the dressing-room door startled everybody. The intruder proved to be the maid of the lady under discussion, and the confidences were not resumed. It appeared that Miss Grovner, Prima Donna and Star of "La Belle Bohème," had summoned Miss Spenser. Miss Spenser could recall verbatim instances of walls with ears, and was disturbed. She followed the maid out, with assumed bravado.

Once in Miss Grovner's presence, her anxiety vanished before a divination of the main chance. With drawn features, the Prima Donna crouched in a chintz-lined chair, in her chintz-covered dressing-room. Pallor, calculable under her make-up at close range, gave odd values to the applied tints. She nodded Miss Spenser to a seat, and requested the maid to leave them for a brief moment.

"I've sent for you, Miss Spenser," she said, "because—I feel just the possibility I might not be able to sing to-night. I *expect* to get through, of course. But if—you see, I feel more ill than I should care to have any one know who need not know. Miss Neville, who alternates with me at matinées, is not in New York. She went this afternoon to Philadelphia, with my consent. It's too late to telegraph. But Mr. Baxter once told me you were competent to sing the role written for me in 'Belle Bohème'—that you knew all the music and the lines. Could you hold yourself in readiness?"

Isolda hesitated. Opportunity evidently hovered on the ragged edge of fate. She would experiment.

"About how far are you countin' on singin'?" she asked.

"I count on getting through with the opera. I thought I made that plain. But if I should n't——"

"If you should n't——" Isolda realized necessary caution, with the odds in her favor diminishing. Her time to be dictatorial might come. It had n't come yet. "I'll sing it or die!" she exclaimed with sudden loyalty. "Only—please—if you would just give me notice of the act you expect to break down in——"

It was Isolda's misfortune that she must always surmount herself, despite herself. Miss Grovner appeared to pull together with a mighty effort, and to tether resolution to summoned will. "I shall certainly not leave any act in the middle," she said, arising. "Thank you very much. That's all. Thank you."

There was nothing to which Miss Spenser could take exception, but she felt snubbed. She made her retreat, intuitively summing up the havoc she had wrought. Whatever Miss Grovner might not do, Isolda had to know that the Star would get through her role that night.

Left alone once again, however, Miss Grovner faced her determination as one bereft of a stimulant. "That's the way they are," she reasoned to herself. "One time of uneven courage, one suspicion of failing power, and you're at their mercy. That must not be. I see now. I must sing, and sing well. I must do it. I suppose it goes with the rest—with his character, with all the wretched history—that he had to let me know. It was one more opportunity to make everything harder. I must do it."

She struck a chord on the miniature piano at her left. She sang a scale lightly, up and down; then up again, soaring involuntarily beyond experimental repression. There was a quaver on the end, but it would do, she decided. It must do.

Out front, in a seat in the middle of the orchestra, there awaited a middle-aged man, broken in appearance and of shabby grooming. Casually looked at, his face might class as merely nondescript with physical wasting. Noted more closely, it would have disclosed a visual idealization, conqueringly irradiate, as if against the tide of all that had sought to crush it: the face of one who had dreamed much, endured much and silently, and reasoned and purposed weakly.

He had ventured to send back his name with a statement of his presence in the audience. No answer had come. He began to regret that part of it, beyond control. He had sent his name in a vague hope of some word in return: a mere recognition; perhaps even some greeting of welcome or encouragement, though he did not count on that. Now he realized the self-seeking meanness of his act. What could it do but disturb the perfect mental balance exacted by such work as hers? He glanced timidly to his right and his left, wondering if he might not make his escape inconspicuously. On either side of him was the lace or silken frou-frou flanked protectingly by black swallow-tail and white shirt-front. The pervasive perfumed rustle seemed to draw apart, to elude his contact and mark his isolation, the while it barred his exit on every hand. He must remain where he was.

In time the opening chorus was over; the comedian had accomplished his interluding horse-play. Off stage could be heard the voice of *La Belle Bohème*. . . . Innumerable times he had listened to that voice through her waxing girlhood. In its richness of maturity, he thought he could still trace the crystal stream of something at which he used to hearken when she would sing as a child of twelve. Somewhere at the heart of her melody was the same almost piping purity. Development, growth, suffering perhaps, had added a luminousness, giving each tone its pearl-shaped light: but the child treble drifted through the years, pierced the milky globular centre like a live-wire. Still undefiled, that child treble marked the true source of the radiance—for him, at least: the secret of the thing he had always foreseen she must attain.

Singing, she appeared at length, far back under the flowered arch of the Café Fête Scene. Silencing, she moved slowly down stage. She moved toward her public, amid applause of that type which assumes as granted the position of a favorite. It was a warm unanimity of hand-clapping, enfolding her in an urging caress. By it she was visibly uplifted, seemed indeed to lean upon it, as she sang.

Succeeding the brilliant finale of act one, was the inevitable applause, from which, as from covert, he looked dazedly out at an usher beckoning him into the aisle. He trembled, recognizing the young man to whom he had entrusted the ominous message of his name.

The usher led the way to the back of the house. "Miss Grovner has received your card, and would like to see you after the performance," he announced. "She suggests that you use this, to avoid any possible delay at the stage door."

The broken man fumbled at the folded slip bearing her instructions to the door-keeper. He did not return to his expensive orchestra-seat, though he had purchased it with his last penny. That had seemed the very least he could do. He had reasoned that nothing else would matter, once he had heard her, looked full upon her, in her glory. Now he felt as one who has brought himself through the test of some merely initial rite. There were yet sterner orders to follow; stronger disciplines; harder exactions. He plunged into the blazing night along Broadway, full of the blind instinct of escape.

It obsessed him,—that indefinite impulse to flee,—to let the darkness swallow him now as it had done then. It was true he had brought his sentence upon himself. The unaccountable whim of sending back his name had been responsible. How bitterly he regretted that! In doing that he had riveted himself into communication with her will,—her insurmountable will, which would draw him

back in obedience to her summons, for all the vain struggle he might oppose. Even as he fought to throw it off, he felt her will closing upon him. He found himself pausing before a jeweller's show-case, consulting the regulator there for the exact hour, lest he should be late. At eleven o'clock the music-play would be over. At eleven he must go to her. Cowardice may be an actual negative power: it could not surmount her summons. He twitched at his black string tie; attempted to order his thin blonde-gray hair before his dim reflection in a darkened plate-glass window. On his way back to the theatre he passed another window, garishly lighted, with a mirror reaching to the level of the sidewalk. He glanced sidelong at his merciless reflection, and shrank within himself.

The signed order she had sent eased away the ordinary difficulties of a stage door where more than usually stringent precautions had been taken against "butters-in." Without knowing just how he had come, he stood before her, picking at his rusty hat. She confronted him, direct from her plaudits, in her last-act garments of jet, the mask of make-up still on her face: an avenging Deity, sombre, relentless.

"Well?" she said, and held herself erect and motionless. "So you came? I rather wondered if you would. I rather doubted your seeing it through—even though you——"

"You did n't have to see me, Vievy," he faltered, "unless you wanted to. I had n't counted on that much."

"Of course I would have to see you, having learned of your presence. You are—my father; or were once."

Involuntarily, his head sank as if from a blow. With an effort he lifted it erect, faced her squarely.

"Nothing is ever without compensation, Vievy," he said. "Not even a life blown to little pieces with dynamite—like mine. To-night I've heard you sing, Vievy. And you are—or were once—my daughter."

She searched the words and the manner of their utterance. They might be a bid for her compassion through flattery. Suspending judgment, she had an impulse to draw him out; to hear what he might say for himself where there was nothing he could say—where the story was all told.

"Be seated," she directed. "There are small things one may learn. How long have you been—free?"

"Four months," he answered, humbly obeying. "You know the prison regulation regarding the time off for good behavior? Then there seems to have been a question of my health raised by somebody. One can benefit by that, you know."

He sat as one again on trial. She paced the long, narrow dressing-room, back and forth, like a sentinel.

"I did n't know; no," she replied. "I have not made a point of keeping posted on such matters." She wrung her hands. The gesture refuted the cruelty of her words. "Oh, but what are you doing?" she cried. "I suppose you must have found work—otherwise you could not be here. New York is far—and difficult!"

"I found work, yes," he said, "many times and places—each time closer to where I might hear you. I have not yet found it in New York, but I came only this morning and—any way, it does n't matter now."

She arrested herself, looked down upon him scornfully. "And you mean to say that you *could* get work, and allowed yourself to give it up to follow the whim of a wasted sentiment? That feeling would have seemed very nice once. It would have troubled me to the heart. I'm sorry to have to remind you that it comes too late."

She marvelled at his deliberation. He replied at last in gentle monotone:

"Necessity fitted purpose in this case, Vievy. A man, you see, with—that behind him, may not stay long in one place. Employers begin to wonder; they commence to question."

Wincing, she resumed her even pace, back and forth.

"Of course you know of Jeanne," she began. "I sent her on through college, and she married Frank, and they went away to be happy, just as if nothing had ever happened. Fate permitted that I mend just that much. I was determined your deed should never ruin *her* life."

"Jeanne happy," he mused. "That's good. That is the first sound of Jeanne's name to reach me in four years."

"Yet you seem to have heard of *me*?"

"There were good women who brought us illustrated magazines, at the prison hospital; and papers too," he explained. "I could almost follow your course, step for step."

Again her compassion flashed from somewhere beneath the surface, in an instant of pity. "The prison hospital!" she cried. "Then you did sometimes break down under it! But you're better now? You're all right now—aren't you—father?"

"Why, of course, Vievy. I'm all right." He smiled.

Even as he spoke, flushing at her sudden kindness, she saw that of which she had taken no account in the beginning: the forced pink of hollow cheeks; the eye, unnaturally kindled, devouring this grain of involuntary affection. His final problem would not be for long. His days were numbered.

"And you?" he asked in return. "Somewhere, a year or more

ago, I read of your contemplated marriage with a Mr. Baxter, your manager. That was a lie?"

"It was a lie," she repeated—"one of my manager's many brilliant advertising ideas. Ugh!" She shuddered.

"I knew it! I knew it!" The fatherhood in him bubbled over. "And you did n't break off with Louis, out home! You did n't, any more than Jeanne with Frank! Maybe, now, you're Louis's wife this very moment!"

She went rigid. He had touched the canker-heart of her wound, reopened the primal hurt, to which all the rest was as nothing. He looked up at her questioningly.

"His wife!" she repeated, and broke into derisive laughter.

Anxiety crept into his voice. "Why not?" he persisted. "Louis was a fine fellow. In his way, he loved you dearly. Surely you expected—some day—to be his wife!"

"Neither to be condoned nor forgiven," she began at length, as one who utters a deferred judgment, "was your offense. It might easily have ruined Jeanne's happiness forever. It did ruin mine. Can you for an instant suppose that this comic opera mummary, prostituting a great art for temporary cheap public favor, with a manager who has built it up successfully because endowed with the very genius of the mountebank—with such a man, ever seeking to foist himself yet further into the life of the woman he thinks he has made, and has tried his best to mar—do you suppose . . . but this is all irrelevant. The point is that for the wreckage you wrought I blame you absolutely and without appeal. Yet you were my father. There was a phase to loyalty, independent of my personal condemnation. Again I ask, do you suppose your own crime lessened the treachery of the man who claimed to love me, yet could bring its consequences mercilessly upon your head—mercilessly upon the head of a man who, whatever else he might be, was *my father*? Do you think I could forgive Louis Oswald that? Marry him! Since the day when they came and took you I have never looked upon his face."

"Vievy!" the man called out. "But surely he came to see you—he explained?"

"With your own lips, you'll recall, you told me you were guilty, and I fled. My first year here he hounded me with letters. I burned them unopened, one and all. He came himself, too. Yes, at last he tried even that."

"And you sent him back?"

"My maid conveyed my message to him verbally. I carefully arranged an insult which should sting him beyond possibility of any further attempt."

The father strained forward in his chair. He held his forehead

with his hands. "My God!" he cried. "What a crime was that I prepared for your perpetration against yourself! I see it now. There lay the shame of it—in the aspect my guilt must throw upon him—in that inevitable result I could not foresee. And all these years I had not thought it out—had not fathomed it. I have even numbed my conscience with a sodden martyr's comfort——"

She lifted her head. "What is that you are saying?"

"Listen, Vievy. Sit down, quiet yourself, and listen. You remember—you and Louis were lovers. Louis was a physician, already arrived, already popular in the country, but thrifty and sternly practical. He opposed your desire to go away somewhere, your longing for one year's study, one year's finding yourself, before your marriage. He saw no reason why you should not marry him at once. You were not foolishly ambitious, but you believed marriage might be the sweeter, when it came, for that little glimpse of yourself, of your possibility, beforehand. Now, did n't you?"

"Why do you go over all that?" she demanded.

"It all goes with what you must yet learn. Now, though Louis was impatient, I, your father, knew your dream—knew it by heart, and I understood. I longed for it, too. . . . You know how I used to keep you singing, singing—never enough."

Tears glistened in her eyes. "Go on," she said gently.

"I wanted to do for you what we could not expect of Louis. As his wife, you would have asked it less than ever. But I was not prosperous. Your mother died, we had lost the farm, her dowry, and I had come up to the home town and taken a position in the branch of the great System, in St. Louis. I had promised Jeanne her University degree. Now, Oswald had his methods. His regular accounts he kept with the little local banking-house. But with us he had deposited the five thousand dollars received intact at the death of his father. To me, and not to you, he confided how that sum was to be as if non-existent until his wedding day—his wedding day, and my daughter's——"

She broke upon the narrative scornfully: "Doubtless his reasons for being touched so deeply when it happened! Where, then, is the news I'm to hear?"

"Child, child, hear me through. You know what I did: how I journeyed secretly to St. Louis, made a sort of amateur disguise, deposited the thousand-dollar check signed to the unknown person I represented, by Louis Oswald—a plain forgery. How, as proven at the trial, I went back in my disguise, closed accounts, drew out the money. It was a plan that might have harmlessly succeeded. I meant to give you that free year of song. Before you returned, the money was to be replaced dollar for dollar. There was something due

at the end of that year from the mortgage sale of the farm. The rest I had known I could save—with you away, and Jeanne away, I could live for almost nothing.”

“And then,” she said, “this Oswald lover of mine must have grown suddenly wary of his deposit, and suspicion fastened on you. Ah, yes, I remember!” She forced a hard laugh, clenching the chair on either side of her.

“But that’s where you are wrong—oh, Vievy child, how wrong!” pleaded the man. “The darkest phase of my crime has been your thinking that—and there was a little while when I thought it, too. Louis did n’t even know—not until long too late. I was apprehended by the System President himself, in St. Louis. Some one had informed against me, had seen me present the forged check and penetrated my disguise. The thing I tried had been done, successfully, it seems, once before. Their evidence was without flaw. They were determined to make an example. That was why I received the extreme sentence, and Louis was powerless. He refused to testify against me, he employed my counsel, he worked night and day in my behalf. All too late. The System must make an example. None of them knew me personally—they had no reason for— Vievy, child, what is wrong?”

She was shivering in her chair as from an ague.

“You—did—what—you—did,” she struggled to say—“for me. I see now—and might easily have seen always.”

Plainly beyond her control, her voice rose to strident harshness: “For me! All for me! And he was innocent of the treachery I condemned him for! I have wrecked three lives—two lives that loved me, and my own. I have done that! And even as I judged you both, I pronounce judgment against myself—I shall never sing again! I shall never sing again!”

She had arisen; was calling it aloud, with delirium in her eyes.

The fatherhood in the man was the sole strength, perhaps the sole ethical concept, of a nature which could divorce the spirit of honor from the idealism of sympathy. The fatherhood in the man gave him courage for what he must do. After her hours of fever, the daughter arose and moved about her apartment, tender of him, as he was solicitous of her, but in seeming lethargy of plan; like one who walked, sleeping. He saw the direct line of his duty, and for it made havoc with his pride. He asked her for money to carry him on a long journey, to a destination where he might find employment. . . .

Through the chill of the morning, the local train down from St. Louis crept, snorting, bringing him, with every puff of the engine,

into keener, more torturing recoil. His must be the task of crawling forth, like a leper, where every man would know his face; read the brand upon his brow.

Drawing his hat very low over his forehead, he huddled in his seat. He detected that some one, forward in the car, had recognized him, commented upon him with some one else. The train slowed down sickeningly. He had reached his native town.

In some way he managed to get himself through the station. If they all remembered him, they were tactful. He felt familiar eyes penetrating his altered dress and walk. They seemed to point him out, to follow him, sneering, but surely they were sly. He could not have laid finger on a single overt act of contempt.

Had he realized the truth, he might have been comforted. Practically, he had been forgotten, as any man must be, even in the smallest circle of interests, after a certain lapse of years. And though the news of his coming would eventually sift through the lazier town gossip, he would be gone ere those who might mark him would arouse themselves to wonder. What he endured this morning was bred within himself, and not external: he ran his gauntlet in no less agony. His recoil had been less had the way to Oswald's home been prickly cactus, with blood from his feet, but darkness. . . .

The Doctor still lived alone with his mother, and she recognized the old friend seeking entrance at their door, and gave him kindly welcome. She seemed to understand; seemed not surprised.

"Grovner!" she said: and then, after the cordial greeting: "Yes, I'm expecting Louis home any minute. Well, well! I always told Louis you were sure to come back, some time, to see him. When he got that pardon, even though it took him so long, I knew it would be you, all over, to seek him out and thank him in person."

The good woman prattled on, revealing the story of the four years' effort her son had made toward his freedom.

"I did n't know that before," he at length managed to tell her. "But I've come to do what I can toward paying him back——"

The mother made a deprecating gesture.

"Oh, I don't mean the money," he urged, awkwardly misunderstanding. "That was restored, of course—was never touched. But I have news he'll want to be hearing about Vievy. He must go back with me to Vievy. He must do that."

"Or at least," he pleaded, noting how she stiffened, "he must hear all I have to tell him about Vievy. There's so much, so much!"

Miss Isolda Spenser was in her dressing-room, confiding to her companions certain indefinite but brilliant assurances from Mr. Trot Baxter.

"It's pretty wise, I tell you, to stand in as I do with 'Trot,'" she boasted. "I'm now regular understudy, and his new Star ain't piecin' out with Grovner's thunder as they hoped she would. I'm to try the part at a *matinée* some day—and if I don't make good, then I'm a liar and Trot's no gentleman. He says he's goin' to see me in Grovner's place yet. He says he would n't take Grovner back if she came and begged him on her bended knees!"

"In which sad event," commented Bertha Browne, "I guess Broadway *might* have something to say. There'd be, maybe, a few others to try to encourage her to sing, somewhere."

"Did she leave for good and all?" questioned Alysia Smyth, who was back calling again, having lost a stage-job secured since her former visit.

"So she thinks," nodded Bertha.

Isolda shrugged. "Married some old flame, you see, from her native water-tank, and gone, both of 'em, with her tubercular father, out to somewhere in New Mexico—that's the rumor.

"And they do say," she whispered in cautious afterthought, "that this consumptive dad they're both so concerned about is nothing but a *common jailbird*."



THE PROSPERITY DISEASE

By Ellis O. Jones

PROSPERITY is a disease which attacks those who have too much money.

It is a virulent ailment, and affects its victims in various ways. Sometimes it induces almost total blindness, so that its victims may ride on an elevated train or other vehicle through blocks and blocks of slums filled with poverty-stricken people, without being aware of it.

In other cases men suffering from prosperity have been known to hand the poor great quantities of books even when these poor did not know where their next meal was coming from.

In still other cases, sufferers from prosperity, which many doctors look upon as a species of megalomania, have secured complete control of an important article of food, such as wheat, and, when the people objected to the resultant increase in price, roundly cursed them for their pessimism and lack of confidence in the integrity of the business world.

The malady would yield readily to treatment but for the unfortunate fact that those who are afflicted with it seem to enjoy it.

GRAND OPERA IN THE UNITED STATES

WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS ON MR. HAMMERSTEIN

By a Musical Critic

TO one who has been attending grand opera for thirty years, its present status is interesting, and gives rise to conflicting emotions. This country is now provided with more grand opera than ever before, and it is spread over a larger territory—although still restricted to narrow limits. Those who have travelled abroad and have found in every city of upwards of twenty thousand inhabitants, or even smaller communities, a well-appointed opera house, with an efficient staff and a long season, with a varied schedule of performances at moderate cost, have marvelled that the institution has not been more widely established in America. Such extended privileges are greatly to be desired, but likely to be years in coming.

We Americans suffer from our actual wealth, from exaggerated ideas of our average individual incomes, from our lack of understanding of the principles of art, and from our curiosity to hear and see great singers rather than notable musical productions. However, the situation has improved somewhat in the last three years. There are now two opera houses in New York, one in Boston, and one in Philadelphia, wholly devoted to grand opera. In addition, there are "seasons" of opera given in Brooklyn and in Baltimore, and occasional "gala weeks" in Pittsburg, in Washington, and a longer season in Chicago. This about makes up the roll for a country of ninety millions of people who spend more for amusement than any other nation on earth. The worst of the situation is that only in New York and Philadelphia does one impresario admit making ends meet, while all other enterprises are conducted at a loss. It ought to be added that grand opera has been an institution in New Orleans on the European plan for more than a century, but it is an exotic and scarcely typical of the institution elsewhere.

What is the trouble?

The impresarios give many reasons, some of which are obvious.

In the long history of the art in this country almost the only impresario to retire with a fortune was Maurice Grau, and he was enabled to do this only when he exercised a virtual monopoly and had, besides, a large subvention. The principal trouble is the cost, and the important question is whether that cost can be reduced. There are certain fixed charges, such as rent, or interest on investment; chorus, orchestra, and administrative staff. These are large, but by no means prohibitive, for any one of a score of cities in the country, even if opera were produced on a metropolitan scale. The great expense comes with the leading artists, who receive all the way from five hundred to two thousand five hundred dollars for each performance, and are guaranteed from twelve to fifteen payments a month, whether they sing or not. It is stated that the Metropolitan Opera Company pays weekly forty thousand dollars in salaries to persons who hardly ever sing at all. Even if this is exaggerated, it is evident that the waste is gigantic. Now, there are few singers in Europe who receive more than two hundred dollars a performance, and most of them receive much less. It is when they come to this land of dollars that they get salaries which in Europe would be considered prohibitive.

Although the Metropolitan Opera Company had supposed that it had cornered the artists of the world for New York, when Mr. Hammerstein began his career as an impresario, a few years ago, he had no difficulty in collecting a corps of artists which rivalled those of his chief competitor. Moreover, Mr. Hammerstein gave the people of this country French opera in splendid style for the first time. Before his appearance in the operatic world, "Faust" and "Carmen" were about the only French operas heard here, save for an occasional experiment which too often failed. In the last two years we have heard five or six operas by Massenet, which had never been sung in this country before, among them "Samson and Delilah" and other excellent works, many of which have been performed in Europe for a generation.

At present the situation is largely a contest between the Metropolitan and Mr. Hammerstein's companies, for sole domination. Each assumes that it does not care what the other does, but the firing line is always sharply engaged. The result is that we are having more and better productions of opera, and more great singers, but that grand opera as an institution is actually making headway on a proper basis is not so certain. It is maintained that a first-class opera cannot be produced under present conditions by the best artists for less than seven thousand dollars a performance. In a sense, this must be a matter of bookkeeping, since many artists are paid whether they sing or not, but it is probable that the figure is fair enough. A similar production in Europe would not cost a fourth of that sum with the

same artists. Good opera is given in Europe, where the cost is not more than three hundred dollars a performance, although, of course, such productions cannot compare with our high artistic standard.

The truth is that most Americans do not go to grand opera to get what is best out of this noble art. It is impossible to do so when the language is foreign to our tongue. There never will be a widespread appreciation of grand opera in this country until it is sung in the vernacular. In Europe all opera is sung in a tongue comprehended by the audience: anything else would be absurd. In this country many persons go to opera without knowing much about it. They go to see, to be seen, or to hear some noted singers. They look upon opera as a concert in costume, and many really think it would be vulgar to listen to opera sung in English.

In spite of this, the demand for grand opera is growing to such an extent that it seems likely to become a permanent institution in all our large cities, each of which will be able to do some "missionary work" in the smaller, tributary cities by sending out companies for brief engagements. Boston has a new opera house and a new company which has been successful at home, and unusually so during a two weeks' engagement this winter in Chicago. Atlanta is going to have a week of the best opera the country affords. Baltimore has a season, and this winter Pittsburg has had two weeks, and Washington one week, of such opera as was never before heard in either city.

Other cities are clamoring for opera, but have not been accommodated because of the expense and the limited number of singers. Boston's experience is particularly informing because it has not pretended to get the world's greatest singers, except for occasional performances. It would seem as if almost any city of three hundred thousand inhabitants could copy Boston with much benefit. This would not only satisfy local demands, but would develop many young singers, who now feel that the field is so narrow that they have no chance unless they become stars of the greatest magnitude. The money that is spent on light opera in this country, on musical extravaganzas, on pianos, piano-players, phonographs, and the like, indicates that there is a large and growing musical public, and that it is inevitable that as public taste in music advances, it will constantly demand a higher grade, and grand opera is the apex of the art of music.

Now, it is evident that so long as grand opera is confined to a fringe along the Atlantic coast, we shall never have it as a national institution. Mr. Hammerstein's achievements have been notable in a few brief years. He has taught us more about the modern development of the art than all his predecessors. But he is hampered by the fact that he must pay enormous salaries to keep his artists away from

rival organizations. There has been much talk of an amalgamation. No one doubts that if there were an earnest, combined effort put forth, grand opera could be produced at about one-third the present cost, and at much less than the present prices to the opera-goer. Moreover, it could be produced in twenty cities, or even forty, if the public taste ran in that direction. Eventually, we must educate our own singers, and it is already notable that, of the great stars in the operatic firmament to-day, Eames, Nordica, Mary Garden, Geraldine Farrar, Homer Martin, and others, are of American birth. We can have grand opera just whenever we make up our minds to have it, as an art, and not as a mere social fad. We must learn to appreciate the works themselves, and not yearn solely for a few great artists in the leading roles. We can develop many American singers who will be competent to sing grand opera in an adequate manner. It is not necessary for every city to have the best all the time.

But all this must come after a national understanding of opera as an art, and not as a mere amusement. No one pretends that he can enjoy the great picture galleries of the world without some knowledge of art fundamentals and the history of painting and sculpture; no one pretends that he can appreciate the best literature without long study; but most persons think they are fully equipped for appreciating grand opera because they are provided with a normal set of eyes and ears—and a libretto! It is true that a certain amount of enjoyment may be received through these, but grand opera appeals to the intelligence in a more complex manner than any other art, requires more study for its appreciation than any other, and until this is fully comprehended there will be no institution of grand opera in this country on other than a social basis.

One cannot help admiring Mr. Hammerstein for violating precedent, and for bringing to us singers and operas which otherwise would have been to us a sealed book. But the notable achievement of this temperamental impresario, with his penchant for saying things as he thinks them, is in showing to us that there is a wide field for this art, that it may become an institution if we have first the willing mind. We spend enough on recreation to maintain opera and still have plenty left for diversions. But we must go at the matter intelligently, and impresarios must have a chance, or we shall live long, as we have for a century, with only New York as a source upon which to draw.

Shakespeare has told us that the man who hath no music in himself, and is not moved by concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; that there is harmony in every immortal soul, which is not felt because of a muddy vesture of decay which so grossly hedges us in. This is true. It is the duty of this generation to awake to the educational, illuminating, cultural, and character-building qual-

ities of the greatest form of music, the most complex, the most emotional, and the most sensuous of all of the fine arts. If Mr. Hammerstein shall prove to be the prophet crying in the wilderness to bring us to a realization of our condition and point out to us the way out, he will have served his generation in a way that will receive the lasting gratitude of posterity.



PROCRASTINATION

By Ralph Bergengren

PROCRASTINATION is the useful accomplishment of putting off till to-morrow what we are not forcibly compelled to do to-day.

Despite the fact that it would be impossible to carry on life without a certain amount of procrastination, the procrastinator is generally regarded as the unfortunate victim of a destructive habit, the unhappy opposite of a lively character widely and admiringly known as Johnny-on-the-Spot. So few of us really are Johnnies-on-the-Spot, and so many of us secretly know ourselves to be procrastinators, that the general acceptance of this idea is perfectly natural.

A true and successful Johnny-on-the-Spot, however, is necessarily an adept and skilful artist in procrastination. There are so many spots to be on in a given twenty-four hours that the art of living lies largely in selecting the important spots for to-day and gently procrastinating the unimportant ones till to-morrow. Because we behold Johnny serenely settled on one spot, it does not follow that other, less important spots may not be waiting for him. It is only when procrastination keeps Johnny from being on any but the most comfortable spot that the matter becomes dangerous to Johnny's well-being.

Popular observation has said that procrastination is the thief of time, which looks well in print, and, as usual with popular observations, fails to make an exact statement. The methods of procrastination are much more like those of a gentleman burglar.



M. PERCY NATOR, THE EMINENT LITERARY VAUDEVILLIAN, IN HIS
LATEST SUCCESS, "AN EVENING WITH THE POETS."

Ladees and gentlemen: With your kind attention, I shall endeavor to present to you the various mental processes to which a given thought might have been subjected by some of our famous poets, ancient and modern. As a basis for my impersonations, I shall take the rhyme which runs as follows:

There was a man in our town,
And he was wondrous wise.
He jumped into a bramble bush
And scratched out both his eyes.

And when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main
He jumped into another bush
And scratched them in again.

If Mr. R-dy-rd K-pl-ng had conceived this idea, we should probably know it in this guise:

A man there was who was wondrous wise
(Even as you and I!)
He jumped in a bush where he lost both eyes.
His action occasioned a great surprise,
But he said he needed the exercise
(Even as you and I!)

Oh, the sightless strain and the burning pain!
It stung like a white-hot brand.
He jumped in another bush nearby
And scratched them in with a heart-felt sigh;
How—I ne'er could understand.

I am quite sure Miss C-r-lyn W-lls would have made a limerick of it, thus:

Walnuts and Wine

A wise man on one of his rambles
Lost his eyes in a big bush of brambles.
He jumped with a cheer
In another bush near
And scratched them back in with mad scrambles.

Omar might have incorporated it into the Rubaiyat:

A Native of Our Town who was most wise,
While seeking Something novel to devise,
Into a Bush of Brambles took a Leap,
And 'mid Its Branches scratched out both His Eyes.

And when He saw that both His Eyes were out,
He paused for One Brief Moment as in Doubt,
And then into Another Bush he jumped
And scratched back in His Peepers with a Shout.

From Vergil's pen it would have come to us as a flowing hexameter.

Wondrous the wisdom and nerve of a man in our town whom I sing of,
Who, while out tramping and quietly seeking for novel diversion,
Recklessly leaped in a bush full of prickles and scratched both his eyes out.
He, when he found that his peepers had suffered complete extirpation,
Sought for a similar bush, which he jumped in and quickly restored them.

H-ry W. L-gf-ll-w might have given it to the world in this form:

Once a wise man in our village,
Longing for a new sensation,
Jumped into a bush of brambles
Where he damaged his apparel,
Likewise rasped his epidermis,
Also scratched out both his peepers.
When he saw his eyes were missing,
Heeding not his frayed condition,
He another bush selected
Into which he took a header,
And amid its thorny branches
Both his orbs he soon recovered.

Mr. W-ll-ce Ir-in might have woven it into a tuneful jingle in this fashion:

In our quiet old town lived a man of renown,
And he was exceedingly wise.
He made a mad rush at a blackberry bush
And jumped in and scratched out his eyes.
When he saw they were out, he hunted about
Till that bush's twin brother he found,
Which he quickly jumped in, sadly scarring his skin,
And emerged with his eyes safe and sound.

Edmund Moberly

Walnuts and Wine

APPEARANCES DECEITFUL

She had all the earmarks of a green stenographer, and it therefore occurred to the fresh young clerk that here was one whom he could guy to his heart's content. After the luncheon hour, when all the men were in the office, seemed the best time to show what a wag he was.

Tipping them that he was going to have some fun, he went up to her and said, "Oh, Miss T——, I heard the funniest story to-day," and he proceeded to get off a time-honored patriarch of a joke.

When he had finished she looked at him guilelessly and said, "Oh, Mr. X, if you ever hear the mate to that, will you tell me?"

"The mate?" said he, rather bewildered.

"Well, you know," said she, "Noah took a pair of all things into the Ark with him, and now that I know one of the jokes, really I would love to know the other."

Elizabeth Farley

ENCOURAGING

Ted: "Are you making any progress in your love affair with that young widow?"

Ned: "It looks that way. She has just put on second mourning."

J. J. O'Connell

A NEW CASE OF ENGLISH HUMOR

Two Southerners were entertaining an Englishman when one of them told the following story:

"There was a poor white in our county named Yarrow, whom every one thought dishonest, but who had never been caught stealing. At last he got too bold, and, through the testimony of a Mr. Brown, he was sent to jail. Soon after Yarrow served his sentence, Mr. Brown was obliged to go to Baltimore and have his eyes operated upon. A much exaggerated account of the operation reached the county, and was told to Yarrow.

"I wish ter gracious," said that worthy, "that when the doctor took out that old Brown's eyes, he'd dropped 'em on the floor and the cat had got 'em!"

At the conclusion of the story, the other Southerner laughed heartily, but the Englishman was horrified. "Just think," he said, "of having a cat in the room when such a serious operation was being performed!"

A. C. Candee

Walnuts and Wine

SOME WORDS IN SEASON

By Edwin L. Sabin

Hark!
The lark!
No, by gad!
I've got it bad
To make a feature
Of that poor creature
Out there, about to freeze,
Knee-deep (do birds *have* knees?
I'll hunt it up), with look
As if he'd much mistook
(Marked "obs.," but fills the rhyme)
In choosing such a time
For April pose.
The hose
(The garden hose, I mean)
I mended yestere'en,
Preparatory
(Same old story!)
To wooing Mayday flow'rs
In this back-yard of ours!
Hark! The sound
Of snow upon the ground!
(Naw, naw; snow makes
No noise. Man shakes
The furnace grate, more coal
To burn.) Upon my soul,
A reg'lar blizzard! Br-r-r!
The lark has gone—yes, sir!
Done went.
'T was good intent,
But judgment some askew.
Whew!
My subject is
(To get right down to biz):
"The Miracle of Spring!"
Oh, I don't give a ding;
I'm through.
Ka-choo! Ka-CHOO!!

Walnuts and Wine

THE RETORT COURTEOUS

A young woman had fallen upon the ice-covered pavement, and a man stepped forward to offer his services.

"Allow me——" he began, but his feet slipped, and he fell flat upon his back.

"Certainly," responded the young woman gravely.

W. Stockard

THE FABLE OF THE GRASPING MILLIONAIRE

There was once a Man who had a Grasping Disposition and One Hundred Million Dollars. Notwithstanding his Great Wealth, he was not satisfied, but used to lie awake nights, depriving himself of much needed rest, in order to think up New and Original Ways of getting the Better of People. One day he found it necessary to fill a Certain Position in his Office, but the Man he selected was something of a Grasper himself, so when the Question of Salary arose, a Difference of Opinion arose also. And the Man thought that his services were worth More than they really were, while the Millionaire thought they were worth Less than they really were. Finally the Prospective Employee offered a Suggestion. Said he: "I will work for you for One Year, on Contract, and for Remuneration you shall pay me One Cent for the First Week, Two Cents for the Second Week, Four for the Third, Eight for the Fourth, and so on, Doubling the Amount for each of Fifty-two Weeks. Of course, towards the End of the Year, the Amount will be much Larger, but in the Meantime you will be having the Use of the Money. How does this Proposition strike you?"

The Millionaire thought a Moment, and the Idea sounded Good to him. "Wait," he said; and Hurriedly he took pencil and paper and did some figuring. He found that at the end of Ten Weeks the Man would have drawn altogether Only \$10.23, so the Millionaire hesitated no longer, but drew up and signed the necessary Documents.

This is all of the Story, except that at the End of the Year the Employee had all of his Employer's Hundred Million Dollars, and the ex-Millionaire owed him \$45,035,796,273,704.95, besides.

The moral of this Fable is that it does n't always pay to be a Pig.

Robert T. Hardy

ONE OF THE SPRING NOVELTIES

A fine day.

L. T. H.

Walnuts and Wine

AFTERNOON TEA

By Ralph Bergengren

"Have you heard how Mrs. Smith is?" "Yes, her hat's a little trying." "Jones! Eloped to Europe with his——" "Maude has faults, there's no denying." "Bridge is how she gets her money." "Do you take two lumps or three?" "Ain't the Suffragettes too funny!"

"Have another cup of tea."

"Tetrazzini's lovely high C——" "I just dote upon Caruso." "Mary Garden? She's too spicy." "Wonder how she dares to do so!" "Problem plays, I think, are horrid." "Dancing don't appeal to me." "Is n't this room something torrid?"

"Have another cup of tea."

"Lemon? Did you say two slices?" "Had to sell their automobile." "Out of fashion to serve ices." "Yes, I'm quite a—bibliophile." "Had the dearest time in Yurrupe." "She engaged to Charlie! Gee!" "I love cakes and maple syrup."

"Have another cup of tea."

"Must be going?" "What's your hurry?" "I think——" "He said——" "I said——" "We——" "An engagement. Got to scurry."

"Have another cup of tea."

NOT CATCHING

A lady called at a real-estate office to engage a store for a rummage-sale. The agent in charge told her he could not give her a positive answer, as there was sickness in the rooms over the store. After leaving, it occurred to her that the illness might be scarlet-fever or something contagious. Going back, she put the question, "Is it a contagious disease?"

The reply came quickly, "No, it's a boy!"

Winifred C. Bristol

GETTING AROUND IT

A Utica gentleman who was in New York recently invited a certain bright and charming young lady to go to the theatre with him. Her home is on the upper west side, in a neighborhood reached by either the Boulevard or the Amsterdam Avenue cars. As they were leaving the young lady's home, she remarked to her escort in the hearing of her father: "We will take the Amstergosh Avenue cars. Father won't let me say dam."

H. E. Zimmerman

Walnuts and Wine

Pears' Soap



Halley's Comet appears but once in seventy-five years. Pears' Soap is visible day and night every day of the year all over the world and has been since 1789, in the homes of discerning people.

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST

"All rights secured."

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Walnuts and Wine

HAD HE?

At one of the leading military schools a cadet lieutenant, rigid with conscious authority and correct in all insignia of his rank, approached a very raw recruit with the question:

"Have you ever drilled before?"

"No," answered the recruit. And, innocently, and with the evident desire to be polite and carry on the conversation, added, "Have you?"

George W. Wilson

WHAT SANDY SAID

A group of Scotch lawyers were met convivially at an Ayrshire inn one cold evening last December. The conversation turned upon pronunciations.

"Now, I," said one of the barristers, "always say *neether*, while John, here, says *nyether*. What do you say, Sandy?"

The hot tippie had made Sandy doze, and at the sudden question he aroused and replied, "I? Oh, I say *whuskey*."

Karl von Kraft

A KNOWING KID

One afternoon there entered the shop of a Trenton butcher a small boy, who gave this unusual order:

"Gimme a pound o' steak—rump or round—and let it be good and tough."

Naturally the butcher was amazed. "Why tough?" he asked.

"Ef it's tender," explained the boy, "de old man will eat it all hisself; but ef it's tough us kids will get a whack at it."

Edwin Tarrisse

JUSTIFIED CONCERN

It is told of an English professor that he once wrote on the blackboard in his laboratory:

Professor Atherton is pleased to inform his students that he has this day been appointed honorary physician to her Majesty, the Queen.

In the course of the morning he had occasion to leave the room, and found on his return that some student had considerably added to the announcement these words:

God save the Queen!

R. M. Winans

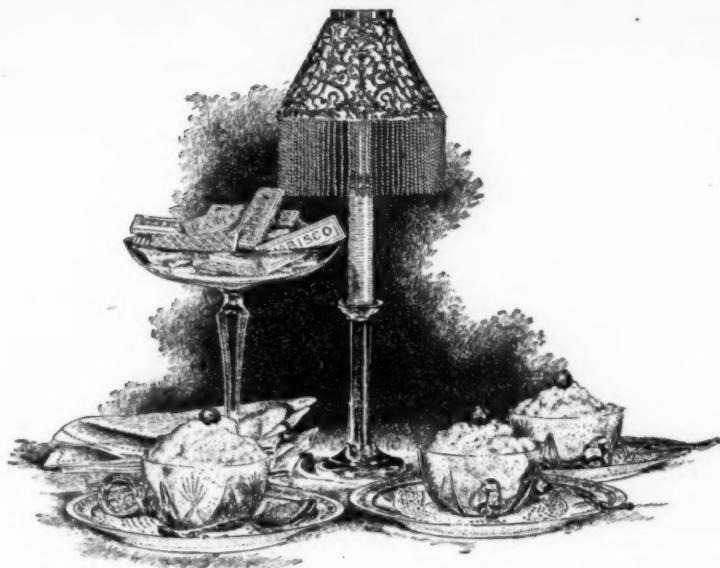
HIS OBJECTION

Artist: "Why do you object to this miniature?"

Nurich: "It looks like me, I'll admit, but it's too stingy. Better make one life-size."

Perrine Lambert

Walnuts and Wine



NABISCO

Sugar Wafers

Dainty serving is intimately associated with dainty edibles. Time, place and occasion may determine the elaborateness of the successive courses, but desserts of all descriptions, ices, creams and sherbets, mark the climax of the art of cookery and refined service, when accompanied by NABISCO Sugar Wafers—the consummation of the ideal dessert confection.

In ten cent tins
Also in twenty-five cent tins

TRY CHOCOLATE TOKENS—A dessert sweet with an outer covering of chocolate and a center suggestive of dainty Nabisco.

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY

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Walnuts and Wine

ONE DIFFERENCE

It is wrong to suppose there is no difference between genius and madness. Madness gets three square meals a day.

Clara O'Neill

DID HE EAT HER UP?

"The bride and bridegroom seem well matched."

"Yes, she's a grass widow, and he's a vegetarian."

Isaline Normand

ALWAYS IN SEASON

By Ralph Bergengren

Now, who is this careless, this happy dare-devil
Who on the spring ice is conducting a revel,
Alone by himself where the ice is so thin
We think every minute to see him go in?

He pirouettes lightly: how gaily he frolics!
The sight is enough to give timid folk colics.
Beneath him the ice is as thin as a cracker.
My stars! He *is* slipping! He'll hit it a whacker!

He has! He is through! How he splutters and struggles!
Ropes! Boards! It is awful to hear how he guggles.
Have courage! Keep cool! Ah, we drag him ashore.
And now we are certain we've seen him before.

Yes, seen him. We know him—and what do you think?
Do you blame us for wishing we'd left him to sink?
We saw him last summer. The fool was afloat
And carelessly, happily, rocking the boat.

A CLINCHER

An Irishman visited a tuberculosis exhibit, where lungs in both healthy and diseased conditions were displayed preserved in glass jars. After carefully studying one marked "Cured tuberculosis lung," he turned to the physician and said:

"Perhaps it's because Oi'm Irish, but if ye cured th' patient, how th' divil could ye have his lung in a bottle?"

J. J. O'Connell

Walnuts and Wine

NONE GENUINE WITHOUT THIS SIGNATURE

W. K. Kellogg



“I Love
my Jam –
But
O You
Toasted
Corn
Flakes”

Copyright, 1909, Kellogg Toasted Corn Flake Co.

THE KIND WITH THE FLAVOR. MADE OF THE BEST WHITE CORN

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Walnuts and Wine

CORDIALLY INVITED

"Are you Hungary?"

"Yes, Siam."

"Well, come along; I'll Fiji."

Neva Hudson

HOW HE GOT OUT OF IT

"My dear, before marriage you told me all your doings."

"Yes, but now I have come to think such talk savors too much of egotism."

L. T. H.

A NEW CLASSIFICATION

A Columbus, Ohio, banker once gave his wife a book of blank checks, all properly signed and ready for filling in.

"You are welcome to use these as you see fit," he told her, "but I want you to write on the stub of each just what that check was used for, then when the book has been used up I will look over the stubs and see what disposition you have made of them."

She handed him the book the other day, after using all the checks, and he began an inspection of the memoranda on the stubs.

"Here is check 79 for seventy-five dollars, marked 'church expenses.' What church expenses are these? I have regularly paid the assessments," he said.

"Oh," replied the wife, "that was for a new Easter bonnet."

R. M. Winans

A WAVE OF REFORM

A Kindly Old Gent who was crossing a bridge was shocked to see a Tough Little Boy sitting on the rail and chewing the stub of a cigar. He said to the boy: "Sonny, it grieves me to see one so young indulging in such a degrading habit. Drop the nasty thing into the water, and promise you won't smoke another one, and I'll give you a dime."

So the boy dropped the stub, and promised. "And now," said the K. O. G., beaming through his glasses and handing over the coin, "tell me what nice things you can buy for ten cents."

"A package uv cig'rettes," said the T. L. B. as he ran away.

Next day when the Kindly Old Gent crossed the bridge, there were ten Tough Little Boys sitting on the rail, all smoking cigar-stubs.

Frederick Moxon

Walnuts and Wine



THE EFFICIENT MINUTE

We have speeded up our ships and railways; we have made rapid transit more and more rapid; we have developed a mile a minute in the air and much faster in an automobile.

But the Bell Telephone is quickest of all. It is *instantaneous*. No weeks or days or minutes wasted in waiting for somebody to go and come; no waiting for an answer.

It is the most effective agency for making minutes more useful, more efficient.

In almost every field of work men are accomplishing more in less time with the Bell Telephone than they could without it. They can talk with more people, near and far; they can keep the run of more details; they can buy or sell more goods, and to better advantage; they can be active in more affairs.

The Bell Telephone has placed a new and higher value upon the minute—for everybody. It has done this by means of One Policy, One System, and Universal Service.

Bell Long Distance Telephone service not only gives an added value to a man's minutes—it accomplishes business results which would be absolutely impossible without it. Every Bell Telephone is the Center of the System.

**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

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Walnuts and Wine

MONTHLY CHEER

By A. Toper

An August bird in February,
A December bottle in June,
Both help to make the diners merry
And keep good livers in tune.

NOT IN HER CLASS

While delivering an address at a woman's club, Mrs. Colt, *née* Miss Ethel Barrymore, told the story of a young woman prominent in New York society, who desired to achieve histrionic honors.

The manager to whom she confided her desire pointed out the inadvisability of the step she contemplated, and added that, even were he disposed to give her the chance she coveted, he would still be in doubt whether her talents were such as to justify such action on his part.

"What is particularly desired by us at the present time," he said, "is the service of people who know the mechanics of the stage."

"Merciful heavens!" exclaimed the young woman, throwing up her hands. "You don't mean to tell me that it is necessary I should be on terms of intimacy with those dreadful stage-hands!"

Elgin Burroughs

THE POET

"Are your poems widely read?"

"Well, the last one I wrote was read by over fifty editors."

Clara O'Neill

A POINTED QUESTION

Wiggs: "Why do they call it 'pin money'?"

Waggs: "Because wives stick their husbands for it."

Dick Dickinson

SURE OF HIMSELF

"I'll give you a position as clerk to start with," said the merchant, "and pay you what you are worth. Is that satisfactory?"

"Oh, perfectly," replied the college graduate. "But—er—do you think the firm can afford it?"

Neva Hudson

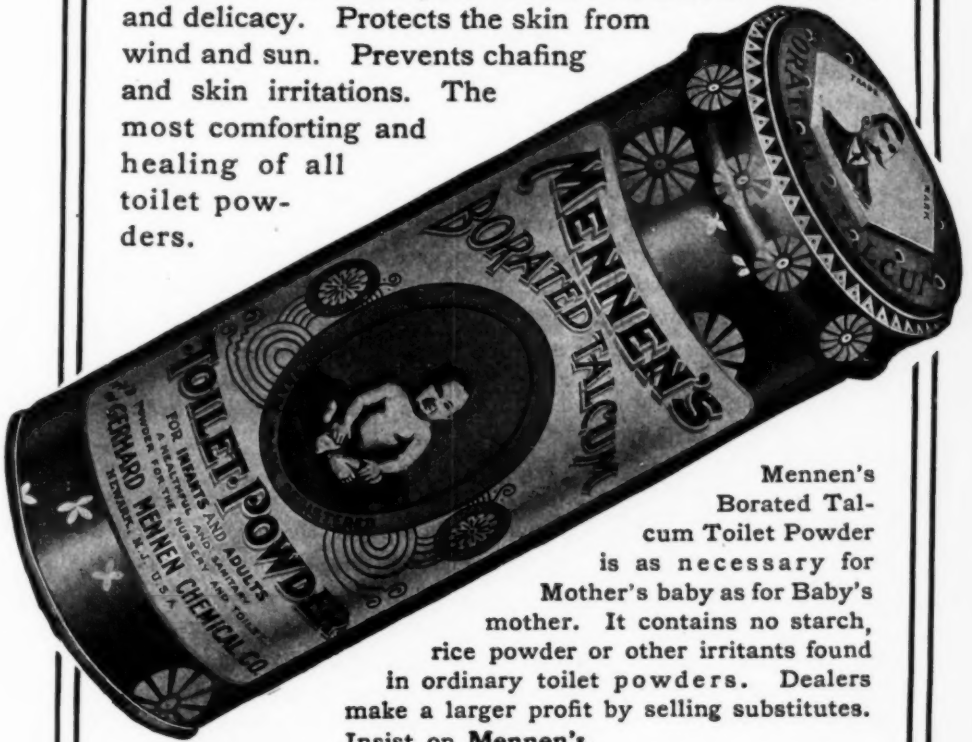
Walnuts and Wine

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Toilet Powder

Superior to all other powders in softness, smoothness and delicacy. Protects the skin from wind and sun. Prevents chafing and skin irritations. The most comforting and healing of all toilet powders.



Mennen's Borated Talcum Toilet Powder is as necessary for Mother's baby as for Baby's mother. It contains no starch, rice powder or other irritants found in ordinary toilet powders. Dealers make a larger profit by selling substitutes. Insist on Mennen's.

Sample box for 2c stamp.



Gerhard Mennen Co.

NEWARK - - - - - N. J.

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Walnuts and Wine

UPHOLDING A BOSS'S DIGNITY

"The 'boss' who disdains to accept an occasional hint from a subordinate is bound some time to have his egotism come a cropper," remarked Walt McDougall, the "dean of American cartoonists." "I once had a controlling interest," he went on, "in an up-state amusement park. The venture was n't panning out well financially, so I resolved upon a strict examination into the methods of the manager.

"Bright and early one morning I arrived at the park, where I found several workmen engaged in the construction of a new 'feature.' Nearby sat a man, idly watching. Ah, this was indeed suggestive of lax system!

"'Come with me, sir!' said I sternly to the workman.

"He followed, without a word.

"'Mr. Jones, pay this man off,' I abruptly ordered the manager, when we arrived at the local office.

"'But, Mr. McDougall——' began that official.

"'That will do,' I replied, with increasing indignation. 'Give him a day's wages at once!'

"When the fellow was paid and had vanished with amazing celerity, I demanded:

"'Now, sir, perhaps you can give me some reason for hiring such worthless vagabonds.'

"'Why, Mr. McDougall,' he was finally able to explain, 'that fellow was never in our employ; he was merely a spectator!'

Raber Mundorf

A SERIOUS THREAT

Indians tell a story of Senator Beveridge's entrance into politics when he was little more than a boy. He won the liking of the Governor of the State by a quaint little speech he made during the presentation of a petition by a delegation whose spokesman was insufferably long-winded and tedious. The man talked to the Governor nearly an hour, during which every one stood. To all it seemed that it would never end.

When, however, it finally did, the Governor asked wearily if the delegates wished to offer any further reasons for the granting of the petition.

Whereupon Beveridge remarked quietly:

"If you don't grant it, Governor, we'll have that speech repeated to you."

Howard Morse



Don't Use "Stone-Age" Stationery

MANY a good man has 1910 apparel and a 1910 automobile, and yet belongs to the "Stone-Age" when it comes to his personal stationery

Would you send a social note to a friend on your business letterhead?

What has he to do with your bricks, or railroads, or diamonds? Would you write it on your wife's linen finish, valentine-looking stationery? What a confession!

We make strong, gentle paper, for gentle, strong men,
It is in note paper form with envelopes to match.
Do your friends the compliment of writing them on

Old Hampshire Bond Stationery

"The Stationery of a Gentleman"

It is just what a man's note paper ought to be—
refined, simple, strong. It is not noticeable in
itself, but it will stand notice when given.
The pleasant half-conscious impression is there.

Write for portfolio of samples and names of your local dealers.

HAMPSHIRE PAPER COMPANY

The only paper makers in the world making bond paper exclusively
SOUTH HADLEY FALLS, MASS.



Walnuts and Wine



There are no idle rich in this country today—no leisure class. It is asked of every man—what is he doing? Life has a meaning. Men are up and dressed betimes—and shaved.

The Gillette Safety Razor is a symbol of the age—it is the most democratic thing in the world. The rich man is not shaved in bed by his valet as he was a generation ago. He uses a Gillette and he shaves himself—in three minutes.

Walnuts and Wine



Get up—get busy—get a Gillette. Don't be an effeminate dawdler and let another man shave you. There is more boost in a Gillette shave at 6.30 than there is in a cocktail at nine.

Buy a Gillette and take a brace. It costs \$5.00 but it lasts a lifetime.

Write and we'll send you a pamphlet—
Dept. A.

King C Gillette

GILLETTE SALES CO.
50 W. Second St., Boston

Walnuts and Wine

THE CAUSE

The reason why men who mind their own business succeed so well is because they have so little competition.

Isaline Normand

SIR WALTER'S KNOCK

"Ruff on the cloak," remarked Sir Walter Raleigh, as he spread down his velvet garment before Queen Elizabeth. He could n't resist giving her this little wrap.

Marian Kent Hurd

OVER-ZEAL

The following bit appeared in a reply to an "Anxious Sweetheart" who desired to marry a young man that was addicted to drink. She had written the "editor" of a home circle department of a cheap mail-order publication, and the following is a part of the "editor's" printed plea that "Anxious Sweetheart" refrain from marrying the young man until he had first reformed:

I have seen the most tender and loving husbands, who, while sober, would do everything possible for their wives and children, but when possessed by that terrible and horrible demon drink, have chased their wives and children time and time again out into the cold snow to perish cruelly from the cold.

George Frederick Wilson

LOVE IN LIVERY

He, dreamily: "The skies are blue,
And I am, too.
What can it be that ails me?"

She, practically: "Your blood, I think,
Is on the blink.
Your, liver, darling, fails you."

W. J. Lampton

Platonic friendship is an island of joy entirely surrounded by danger.

Ellis O. Jones

AN ODD WISH

A student at a technical school in Boston, who had too frequently asked leave of absence, offered on one occasion as a reason the necessity of attending the funeral of a cousin.

"Well," said the doubting instructor, "I suppose I must let you go; but I do wish it were a nearer relative."

T.

Walnuts and Wine

Standing for a Century

1810 — 1910

LIKE some stalwart giant of the forest, which for a century has withstood the violence of the elements, the **Hartford Fire Insurance Company** has completed its hundredth year of vigorous life. Since 1810 a host of insurance companies have disappeared in the smoke of a fiery century. During that period the **Hartford** paid over One Hundred and Thirty Million Dollars in losses, and yet, as years passed, grew greater and stronger. It stands to-day like the mighty tree, unblemished, sound to the core, and still growing with all the vigor of youth.

A century of success *must* be based on right service. When you buy fire insurance secure the best. It costs no more.

Ask for the Hartford

Any Agent or Broker Can Get You a
Hartford Policy



STATEMENT JANUARY 10th, 1910

Capital,	\$ 2,000,000.00
Liabilities,	14,321,953.11
Assets,	23,035,700.61
Policy-holder's Surplus, . .	8,713,747.50

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Walnuts and Wine

BY INSTALMENTS

"Do you really, really care so very much for me, darling?" she asked.

"Dud—dud—does a—dud—dud—dud—duck—cuc—cuc—care for water, sus—sweet? Indeed, I dud—dud—do, dud—dud—darling! You are the one pup—pup—priceless pup—pup—pearl among pup—pup—pearls, pup—pup—Polly! You are que—que—queen of my heart, dud—dud—darling! The pup—pup—power that bub—bub—bends me like a reed—at thy fuf—fuf—feet!"

And she apparently believed him.

Hugh Morist

HOW PAT COUNTED THEM

Racial pride is a kind of patriotism that lasts as long as any sentiment. A stranger in Milwaukee, seeing an Irishman at work on the street, asked him what the population of the city was.

"Oh, about one hundred thousand," was the reply.

"A hundred thousand! It must certainly be more than that," said the visitor.

"Well," said the Irishman, "it would be about three hundred thousand, I guess, if ye were to count the Dutch."

Charles S. Gerlach

CAN'T PLEASE EVERYBODY

The manager of an asbestos mill in the West conceived a novel idea for New Year's announcements. He had them printed on thin asbestos and enclosed in envelopes of the same material. As he was uncertain of the correct addresses of some of the stockholders, he ordered his stenographer to write on each envelope "Please Forward."

The idea was clever, but one may appreciate the feelings of the widow of one of the stockholders when she received an asbestos envelope addressed to her late husband, with the inscription "Please Forward" beneath the address.

A. P. B.

HIS IDENTITY DISCLOSED

Judge: "What do you do during the week?"

Witness: "Nothing."

Judge: "And on Sunday?"

Witness: "I take a day off."

Judge: "Oh, I see. What salary does the city pay you?"

E. J. Timmons

Walnuts and Wine


LOOK FOR THE DIAMOND

You would quickly condemn a stylish shoe with a roughly finished seam — why overlook the eyelets? There are from six to twenty-four of these little servants in each shoe. They are very important. When worn "brassy" they mar the appearance of your foot quite as much as a shabby toe or heel.

Diamond Fast Color Eyelets

ARE THE ONLY shoe eyelets made with tops of solid color. They retain their bright, new appearance long after the shoes are worn out. They simply

CAN'T WEAR "BRASSY"

When next buying shoes look for the little diamond shaped  trade mark which is slightly raised on the surface of the eyelets as shown above. Be particular. Its presence is a guarantee of shoe quality — an assurance that the manufacturer wants to give you the best there is.

Ask your dealer about them, or write us for descriptive booklet. It's interesting

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Walnuts and Wine

THE USUAL RESIDUE

Hampton: "Was anything left after the debts of millionaire Flammer were paid?"

Harler: "Yes; his relatives were."

G. T. Evans

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

By L. B. Coley

He may be over ears in debt,
His wife a last year's costume wear,
But what's the odds so long as he
Can keep his auto in repair?

BY DIFFERENT ROADS

A prominent New Hampshire farmer of the old type has two grown-up sons. One is a preacher of the gospel, while the other is a liquor-dealer.

A New Yorker, in company with several other friends, was talking at the old man's home, about his family. At last one of the company present asked the old man what his sons did for a living.

The old man replied, "One is serving the Lord, and the other the Devil, and both are doing well."

Edward McAuley

ENCOURAGING

"Doctor, you've been coming here a long time and my husband is still helpless in bed. Do you think he'll ever sit up again?"

"Sure; he'll sit up when he sees my bill."

Charles C. Mullin

THE DUKE SCORES

Miss Passé: "That's the Duke of Oldhouse. He married a million."

Mr. Blasé: "You don't say! Well, he's got Solomon beat a mile!"

W. Carey Wonderly

FOUND WITH THE GOODS

Artist: "I'm going to do a picture of Whittier's Maud Muller."

Friend: "How do you imagine she looked?"

Artist: "Rakish."

H. L. Herrmann

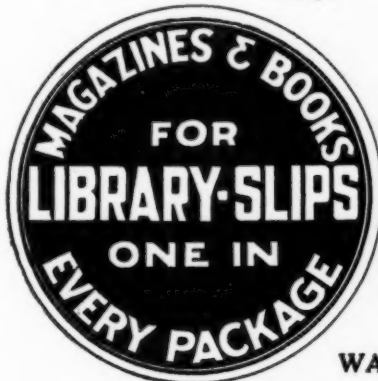
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Dept. G



WATCH for the ROUND SEAL

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention **LIPPINCOTT'S**.

It appears in all advertisements of manufacturers who pack **Library Slips** with their products.

Walnuts and Wine

NOT A MODERN CUSTOM

In a certain church in Philadelphia the custom has prevailed of presenting to each scholar of the Sunday School an egg during the exercises at the celebration of Easter. On an occasion of the kind, the assistant clergyman arose and made this announcement, "Hymn 419, 'Begin, my soul, the exalted lay,' after which the eggs will be distributed."

Robert E. Bradley

LITERATURE

"I have read this poem over a dozen times," said the assistant editor of the *Highbrow Magazine*, "and I can't make head or tail of it."

"Good!" exclaimed the editor. "We'll hit it up for a feature, together with an announcement denying that true poetry is dead. And don't forget to send a check for \$1.25 to the fellow who wrote it."

S. S. Stinson

SUCH THOUGHTS

By Frank H. Williams

Upon my typewriter I think,
But when the thing is on the blink
What awful things it shows I think:
\$#"&¢: :) (\$%###!&¢\$#%\$) (.&!!!

Gold-rimmed glasses help mightily in looking on the bright side of things.

Ellis O. Jones

HER PREFERENCE

Miss Plumleigh: "According to reports, dress-goods will be much higher this season than they were last."

Miss De Thynne: "Well, I'm glad of it. I never did approve of those décolleté costumes."

E. J. Timmons

THE STUDENT WAITER

Guest: "Why don't you bring out my steak? I ordered it an hour ago. Did you have to kill it first?"


Waiter: "Certainly. What do you think this is—a vivisection laboratory?"

Dick Dickinson

Walnuts and Wine

White Rock

"The World's Best Table Water"



**HOW TO COOK
FOR THE SICK**
SIMPLE TASTY RECIPES
TO TEMPT
INDIFFERENT APPETITES

Dainty dishes for the sick and those who are not sick but desire their food prepared in an appetizing, wholesome manner.

Particular attention is given to the instructions for serving and garnishing.

"This is an excellent and much needed volume not only for hospitals, where it has been used with success, but also in the home."—*Tribune*, Chicago.

"Every house-keeper should use such a cook-book, so as to preserve the health and digestion of those in her care."—*The Key-stone*, Charleston, S. C.

By Helena V. Sachse Cloth, \$1.25

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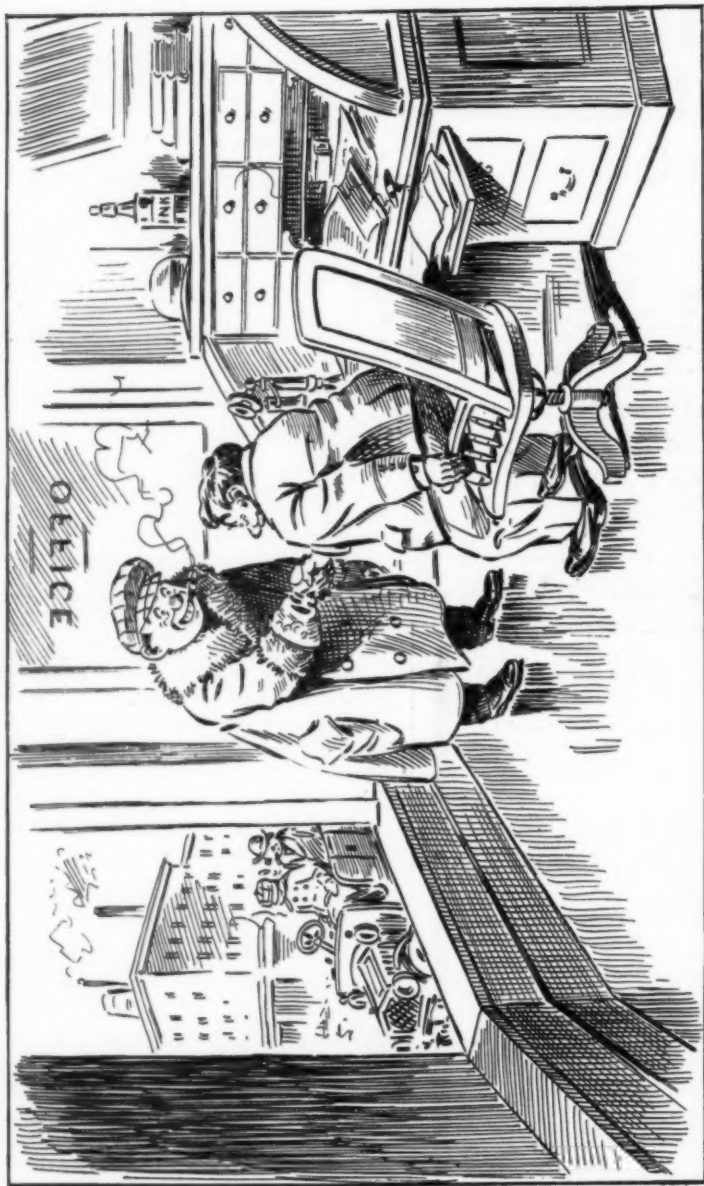
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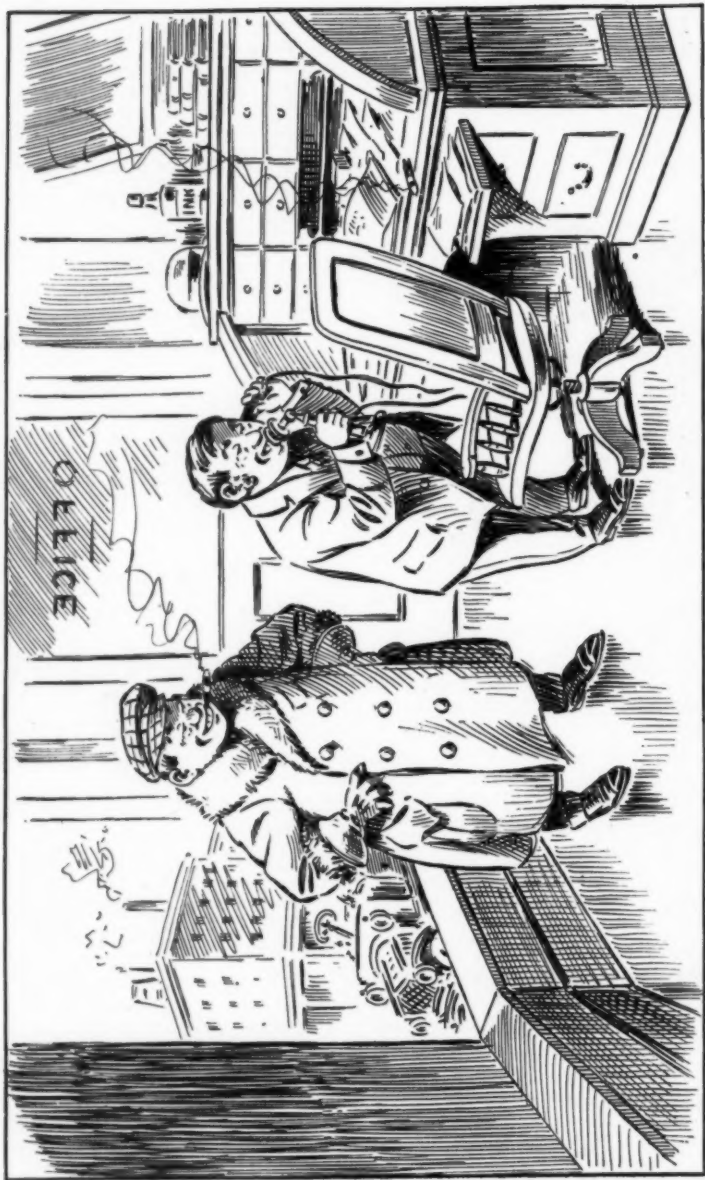
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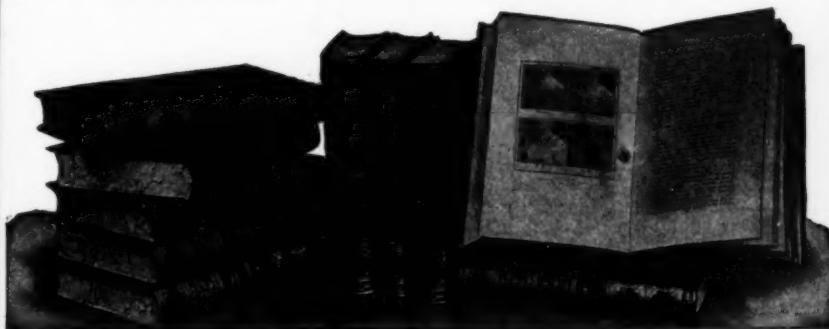
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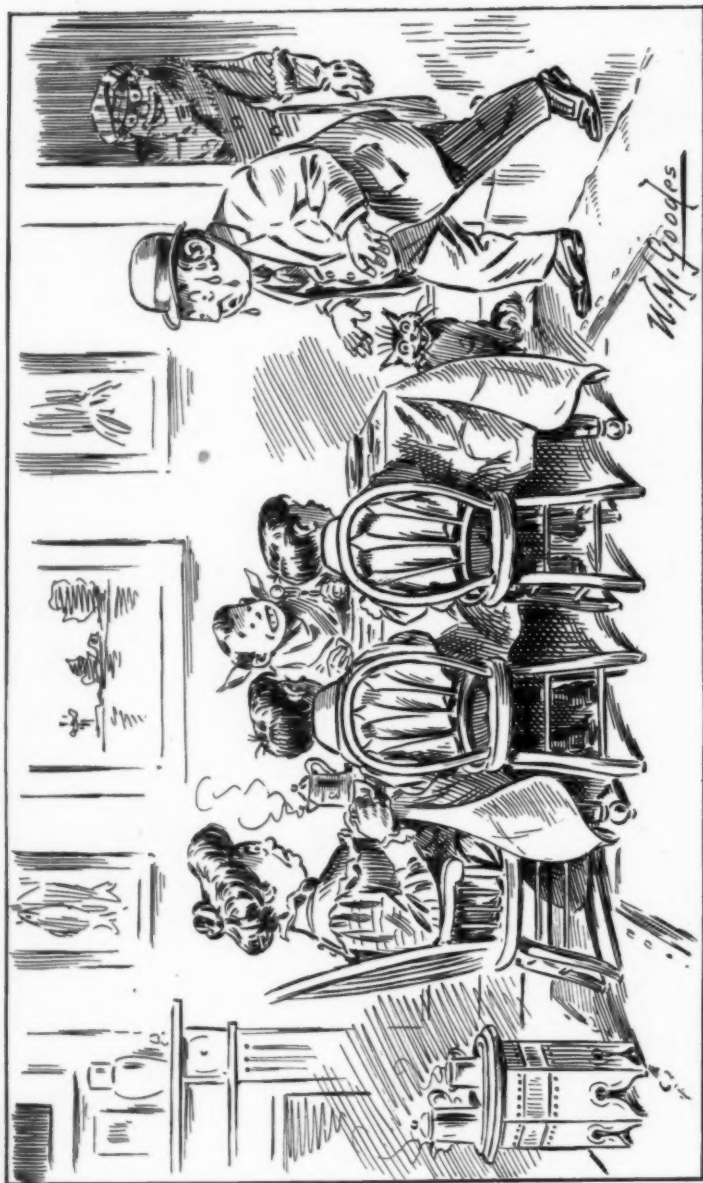
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